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Changing Foreign Policy of the JDP in the Context of Turkish National
Identity (Master's Thesis)

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Author's Declaration

Herewith I declare that I have written the Master's Thesis on my own and I have cited all sources.

Prague, 29 June 2018

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Author's Signature

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List of Abbreviations

NATO: North Atlantic Treaty

EU: European Union

US: United States

JDP: Justice and Development Party

WP: Welfare Party

CIA: Central Intelligence Agency

PKK: Kurdistan Workers Party – Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê

GNAT: Grand National Assembly of Turkey

DP: Democratic Party

MP: Motherland Party

EC: European Community

NOP: The National Order Party

NSP: The National Salvation Party

TPP: The True Path Party

IMF: International Monetary Fund

TUSIAD: The Turkish Industry and Business Association

TOBB: The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey

YPG: People's Protection Units

Introduction

The aim of the thesis is to qualify and examine the characteristics of the change in the Turkish foreign policy beginning from the JDP's electoral victory in 2002 until 2017, and provide an explicit evaluation of the Turkish national identities' impact on foreign policy orientation. In this regard, I raised the question that how has the Turkish foreign policy changed during the JDP era in the context of Turkish national identities. This question will be answered and the impact of the national identity on the construction of the new foreign policies will be elaborated. Especially considering that the Ottoman past which embodies Islamic elements was strictly dissociated by the newly proclaimed modern state, it is worthwhile to discover that realist pro-activism and the revival of the Neo-Ottomanism thought that the JDP introduced during its 15 years term. Along with the JDP's Middle East policies and Turkey's role in the Syrian conflict; escalation of the tension with the Russian Federation, Davutoğlu's resignation in May 2016 signaling the end of the Davutoğlu doctrine, following the failed coup attempt in July 2016 and rupture with the West will be analyzed in order to discover the change in foreign policy.

In the 21st century, the world politics have been going through a change or a transformation which requires re-positioning and revising governmental and foreign policies of the great and regional powers desiring to maintain themselves as influential actors. With the end of the Cold War, it is hard to say that very few countries and actors were affected with the outcome. The wind of change started in Berlin with the Wall's fall in 1989, continued with the reform movements in the Eastern Europe and finalized with the entire dissolution of the Soviet bloc in 1991.

With the emergence of the new system, questions were raised to answer that whether a more peaceful and stable order will replace the previous tense but secure order. James Woolsey, the then-director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), presumed the post-Soviet period would be as "more dangerous, more perplexing, more uncertain and more challenging than it was before" (Grier, 1993). As a matter of fact, the clash of globalization and nation-state, strengthened ties to the traditions and cultures, micro-nationalism, religious sectarianism and growing income gap between developed and underdeveloped countries have been justifying his pessimistic but accurate presumption. The disappearance of the bipolar international system has caused regional problems to arise and regional variations to become more distinct, eventually the comparative study of regions received much attention (Kardaş, 2013, p. 641).

As an aspirant power in the emerging regionally determined international system, Turkey has potential to play important role in the world affairs with its large military participation in the body of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and unique location holding the keys to the Turkish Straits, also controlling part of the roads from the Balkans to the Middle East and the Caucasus (Aydın, 1999, p. 152). Locating Turkey in the post-Cold War period international system is complicated and rather challenging. To avoid oversimplification, Aydın's following comment should better be taken into consideration:

"Not only does Turkey not appear to fit any one geographical category, but it does not fit any one cultural, political or economic category either. About 97 percent of its land mass lies in Asia, and yet Turkey's progressive elite consider their country as part of Europe. About 98 percent of its population is Muslim, and yet Turkey is a secular country by choice and its religious development through the years has taken a different path from that of other Islamic countries." (1999, p. 153)

If necessary to categorize, "the pivotal state" term is suitable for Turkey, as it is defined as an actor capable of affecting regional and international stability (Chase, Hill & Kennedy, 1996). Chase et al. further praise Turkey's success as a growing economy; on the other hand, it should be noted that the dichotomies of the East and West, secular and religious, and Europe and Eurasia have found themselves crossroads in Turkey, which might have a risk for challenging the immature democratic institutions. Zbigniew Brzezinski, the national security advisor of the then-President of the United States Jimmy Carter, masterfully examines the conflict of dichotomies in Turkey with these words:

"Turkey, a postimperial state still in the process of redefining its identity, is pulled in three directions: the modernists would like to see it become a European state and thus look to the west; the Islamists lean in the direction of the Middle East and a Muslim community and thus look to the south; and the historically minded nationalists see in the Turkic peoples of the Caspian Sea basin and Central Asia a new mission for a regionally dominant Turkey and thus look eastward." (1997, p. 134)

Those three directions have found themselves contexts to unfold depending on the conjuncture and generated one of the most fundamental questions in Turkish political history: What describes Turkish national identity genuinely?

During the Cold War period, Turkey built its foreign relations on the unofficial doctrine of containing the Soviet threat and setting limits to its relations with the neighbors and

geographies where Turkey has historical and cultural ties. As Larrabee (2008, p. 3) remarks, “the end of the Cold War removed the Soviet threat and opened up new opportunities and vistas to Turkish foreign policy in areas that had long been neglected or off limits to Turkish policy: the Balkans, the Caucasus and Central Asia, and the Middle East”. Indeed, in the past, Turkey’s containing role for the NATO and the Western camp, and consolidation of its commitment had a lot of promises and provided with privileges, but only within a limited sphere.

After the transformation of the international system, Turkey found the opportunity to reconfigure its priorities through a wider perspective and take on the responsibility as a regional power. In parallel, Keyman (2009, p. 8) remarks that the international community anticipates Turkey to pursue “a proactive, multi-dimensional and constructive policy in many areas, ranging from contributing to peace and stability in the Middle East, to playing an active role in countering terrorism and extremism”.

Previous foreign policy strategies failed to cohere with the Turkey’s attributed role in the new emerging geopolitical system. Thus, Turkish statesmen sought for a remedy to bring dynamism to Turkey’s long-standing position which was westward since the proclamation of the Republic of Turkey in 1923. In the pursuit of modernization, the founders of the young Republic had initiated series of reforms secularized the country and ruptured with the Ottoman Empire past also with Islamism and pan-Turkism. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the modern Turkish state and the first President of Turkey, had prioritized good relations with the European countries but also promoted status-quo seeking and a neutral position in international relations. Therefore, it is regarded that the constituent foreign policy dynamics of the modern Republic of Turkey were based on Westernism, which is interchangeable with modernism in this context until the 1950s, and the policy of status-quo (Oran, 1996, p. 353).

After Turkey joined the NATO in 1952, the constituent policies have evolved with Turkey’s eagerness to join the Western camp and continued discretely until the 1990s, when the domestic problems and security threats started to emerge. Violence in the Southeast Turkey and unrest led by the Kurdistan Worker’s Party (PKK) drew much of the attention of the government and led to developing alternative ways to ensure the security during these years (Barkey, 2000, p. 100). Farther, the obstacles to Turkey’s admission to European club such as human rights violations, the Cyprus dispute with Greece and Greek Cypriots were frequently brought into the agenda during the meetings; thus, signaling that Turkey was not perceived as part of the Europe anymore by its allies. During unpleasant and stagnant periods with regards

to Turkey's relations with other countries, alternative foreign policy thoughts appeared either to revive Islamic power of the Ottoman Empire or to strengthen ties to the Turkic communities in the Central Asia in order to adapt into the newly emerging system.

Although there were efforts, none of the 1990s governments were able to generate a firm foreign policy on the theoretical level which is sufficient to locate Turkey as a pivotal regional power until 2002. After turbulent periods during the coalition governments' term in the 1990s and following the economic crisis in 2001, the Justice and Development Party (JDP) rose to the power in 2002 elections receiving 34.29 % of the electoral votes (Genel Seçim 2002), which was a victory leaving all the political parties that formed the previous coalition governments out of the competition due to 10 % electoral threshold, and since then the JDP achieved to hold the government as the single party. Gumuscu and Keyman (2014, p. 22) suggest that the JDP has realized the risks and potentials attributed to the transformation and used it as an instrument to achieve growth and empowerment.

The JDP's founder deputies had background in the Welfare Party (WP), which was an anti-Western, conservative Islamist party that later was banned from the politics for the reason of challenging secular principles of the state. In 2002, founders of the JDP verbally declared a dissociation from the WP (Saraçoğlu & Demirkol, 2014, p. 304) and the JDP started its political career as a brand-new organization by abandoning outmoded visions of the previous governments. In other words, the JDP's foreign policy was "built on a criticism of the earlier policies" (Altunışık & Martin, 2011, p. 570) and promoted itself as a fresh breath after unsteady times.

The theoretical basis of the JDP's foreign policy was mainly shaped by Ahmet Davutoğlu and his vision of *Strategic Depth*, which shares the same name with his book. He was appointed as Chief Advisor to the then-Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in 2002 and later in 2009 appointed as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Akıllı, 2013, p. 89). In the party program published in 2002, it was emphasized that the JDP will pursue a realist proactive foreign policy focusing on Atlantic and European dimensions, along with attaching importance on Eurasia (AK Parti Seçim Beyannamesi, 2002, p. 91). Moreover, it was indicated that the Turkey's bid for full membership to the European Union (EU) will be regarded of top priority in the foreign policy agenda. After the second consecutive election in 2007 that the JDP won, Turkey started to focus on the Middle Eastern affairs, mostly played mediator role and with Davutoğlu's

appointment to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs position enabled him to practice his Strategic Depth doctrine and *neo-Ottomanism* extensively.

Although the JDP government is still in power, when the literature is examined, it can be seen that there is considerable amount of studies on the JDP's foreign policy. The large literature written in English and Turkish contributed by scholars, political analysts, researchers and policy-makers have enabled me to conduct the research with reliability and benefit from the opinions of experts.

The notion of change has also drawn attention by the scholars. Hermann's (1990) foreign policy change model has not been widely used to explain foreign policy change, although there exist a few works focusing on it. Firstly, in *Making Sense of Turkish Foreign Policy in the Middle East under AKP*, Altunışık and Martin (2011) examined the JDP's foreign policy in the Middle Eastern affairs and reached the conclusion that Turkey became more independent recently, however the case has not shown the indicators of foreign policy orientation change. The second work that used Hermann's typology is *Understanding the 'New' Turkish Foreign Policy: Changes Within Continuity, is Turkey Departing from the West?* written by Mesut Özcan and Ali Resul Usul in 2010. Reaching the same conclusion as the previous work, Özcan and Usul mentioned that there are observable adjustment changes and especially the JDP's EU policies indicate qualitative program changes. Therefore, their main argument is that change and continuity were being carried out in tandem.

In *Locating Change in Turkish Foreign Policy: Visa Policies of the Justice and Development Party in the 2000s*, Aygöl (2014) breaks down visa policies of the JDP. He proposes that visa policies are reliable indicators of foreign policy change and claims that major distinctions were observed between the first and second governmental terms of the JDP. The last work that I looked through is Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun's article published in 2010, examining Kosovo's independency and Turkish stance towards it. Demirtaş notes that Turkey's policy towards Kosovo is rather a policy of continuity than change, therefore Turkey's recognition of Kosovo as an independent state is only a program change based on Hermann's typology (p. 79).

The primary sources used for this thesis are majorly comprised of the party programs published on the JDP's website and the government documents obtained from the Grand National Assembly of Turkey's (GNAT) website. The party programs were prepared before

each parliamentary election and the party leadership aimed to promote their vision to the electorates, future actions planned to be initiated and possible solutions for related policy fields. The secondary sources compose the majority of the sources since the literature provided by academicians, politicians and column writers is extensive. Thus, it was necessary to comprehend the developments in the Turkish foreign policy and notable remarks of the experts, in order to present these ideas to the authors.

As the titles of the mentioned works reveal, all of the examples focus on certain regions such as the Middle East or certain policies such as visa regulation or reaction towards Kosovo's independence in a given time frame. This thesis aims to analyze the change in foreign policy between 2002 and 2017 through the lens of Hermann's change typology, bringing explanation into notable foreign policy decisions which have impact in Turkey's relations with other countries. Also, considering the fact that most of the abovementioned works were published in 2010 and 2011, thus it is obvious that there is a lack of recent studies examining the change of the JDP foreign policy through Charles Hermann's typology. This situation reiterates this thesis' aim which is to contribute to the literature with its rare scope of the study in terms of time frame and the theoretical framework.

The first chapter of the thesis will provide a brief history of modern Turkish national identities and modernization efforts started in 1923. Westernism, neo-Ottomanism and Turkism will be scrutinized from their roots and their reflections into the foreign policy with a broad evaluation of Kemalist modernism. In the early republican period, the Kemalist principles and policy of status quo seeking was prevailing, whereas during the Cold War, Westernism identity was reflected in the foreign policy which led Turkey to become less neutral in its international affairs. After the collapse of the communism and emergence of the power vacuum in the ex-Soviet space, the world system became much more complicated and Turkish foreign policy makers struggled to find a role for Turkey, which would include Turkey to the game, as it was no longer a buffer country to halt Soviet influence beyond Caucasia. Thus, 1990s were Turkey's adaptation period to the new world order.

The second chapter provides the methods of this study and the theoretical framework which is based on constructivist approach towards identity; whereas the third, fourth and fifth chapters explicate the JDP's foreign policy of 15 years. In the few first years, the JDP's agenda pursuing full membership to the EU and good relations with the Western allies will be evaluated. Then, the second governmental term of the JDP has shown a significant shift towards

the Middle East and Muslim countries, which was considered as a revival of the Ottoman thought since the Ottoman Empire had vast territories in the Middle East. Therefore, the JDP's position towards the Middle Eastern affairs, notably the Syrian conflict and Israel will be evaluated. Also, Turkey's strategies in the Central Asia, cultural and economic cooperation efforts with the Turkic world will be analyzed through Turkism identity. Policy changes in distinct cases, such as rapprochement with Russia, will be reviewed in accordance with Charles Hermann's (1990) foreign policy change typology.

In the conclusion chapter, findings will be summarized and both Turkey's changing foreign policy gravitation in general and the JDP's foreign policy changes between each governmental term will be presented clearly. Also, the question of identity will be answered along with whether the Westernism still prevails or a composition of previous identities was created by the JDP.

1. Traditional Turkish Foreign Policy Identities

1.1 Westernism

Even though contemporary relations of the Republic of Turkey and its Western allies seem shaky, the traditional orientation of the modern Turkish state has usually prioritized the West rather than the East. From 29 October 1923, the time when the Republic of Turkey was officially proclaimed, to the end of the Cold War in 1991, the Turkey pursued Western-oriented governmental agendas. “Despite the fact that Turkey had fought against the Western powers during the First World War, after gaining independence it opted for the Western world” (Aydın, 1999, p. 160). Since the founding fathers of modern Turkey perceived the West, namely European countries, as the cradle of civilization and especially Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s current of thought was highly influenced by the French Revolution and concepts such as nation-state and republicanism, Turkey did not adopt an anti-Western stance out of antagonism. On the other hand, the modern state was “built on the negation of the multinational, theocratic Ottoman Empire” (Uzer, 2011, pp. 23-24), legacy of which was considered as adversary by the new state administration. Therefore, installation of a modern state system through reforms which were quite opposite of the Ottoman system was the main priority of Atatürk and his fellows (Mardin, 1990, pp. 158-159).

With the organization of military genius Atatürk and his fellows, the modern Republic of Turkey was founded in 1923 after 4 years of Turkish War of Independence. Atatürk’s worldview and principles formulated the foundations of modern Turkey and the principles of foreign policy. Constituent dynamics of the Turkish foreign policy originated from the first years of the young Republic, the time when Kemalist principles –Republicanism, Statism, Populism, Revolutionism, Nationalism and Laicism, were prevailing and taken as state ideology. Kemalism is beyond a political ideology alone rather a philosophy. “Kemalist ideology may best be described as rational and scientific; it assumes that national and international problems can only be solved by intelligent and pragmatic actions” (Giritli, 1984, p. 251).

After the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in the First World War, a manifesto named the National Pact was created by patriots to both announce that the end of the Ottoman Empire and the rejection of Ottomanism, Islam Union and Turanist/Pan-Turkist policies (Berkes, 2002, p. 480). According to the National Pact, six main principles were set to declare that a new modern

state would be established. The defeat of the Ottoman Empire was followed by the allied powers' efforts to put the Treaty of Sèvres into effect, which was the agreement of partitioning the Ottoman Empire's territories and leaving a small part in Anatolia to the Ottoman Empire without any sovereign rights of its people (Balçı, 2017, p. 51).

On the other hand, the socialist revolution in Russia changed the condition of the occupied Anatolia. The essence of the Turkish War of Independence stemmed from anti-imperialist stance against the occupants, the Bolsheviks welcomed Turkish efforts to get close to the Soviet Russia. During the years of the Turkish War of Independence organized by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Kazım Karabekir and their fellows, "the Western powers were the deadly enemies of the Turks, whereas the Bolsheviks and Muslims of Asia provided monetary and moral support" (Zarakol, 2011, p. 126). In this regard, rapprochement between the cadre under the leadership of Atatürk and Moscow can be considered a turning point of the war, since the Eastern front in Anatolia was no longer needed to be protected against the Russian threat, and the troops in this front were sent to the Western Anatolia to fight against occupant powers (Balçı, 2017, p. 53). Also, Bolsheviks' support with armaments and money was another factor that strengthened Turks' position against the occupants, which was resulted with the decisive victory of Turkey. As a result, extraordinary victories and determined struggle of the Turks against the occupant allied powers surpassed the detrimental Treaty of Sèvres.

After the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (GNAT) enacted series of reforms to institutionalize Turkey's Western identity which were designed under the light of Kemalist principles and guidance of Atatürk. This might pose a question that why Atatürk turned towards the West instead of maintaining cooperation and alliance with the Soviet Union. Atatürk's ideal for modern Turkey was to catch up with, and even transcend, the level of contemporary civilization which was at that time associated with the West regarding political, economic and cultural aspects. This does not mean a mere Western standpoint, rather a universal civilizational approach which drew the Europe as the model in that time. Moreover, transition from an empire to a modern nation-state created a need to form a bourgeoisie and capital accumulation to strengthen the deprived economy. Thus, rather than building the new state on the impulse of hostility towards the West, Atatürk pursued a pragmatic way.

First and the most important reform was the official abolition of the Ottoman Sultanate on 1 November 1922 (Akşin, 1997, p. 37), which was the result of Turkish struggle putting the

Ottoman dynasty into a position of *other* against the modern state. After the abolition of the Caliphate which was belonged to the Ottoman Dynasty, Atatürk pointed out that, “The Turkish nation has perceived with great joy that the obstacles, which constantly, for centuries, had kept Turkey from joining all civilized nations and marching on the path of progress, have been removed” (Bozdağlıoğlu, 2003, p. 52). Furthermore, symbols representing the Islamist tradition and identity were replaced with modern elements associated with the Western civilizations. The major reform in this regard was the adoption of a new dress code which was followed by a law enacted on November 1925, requiring all men to wear hats and criminalizing wearing of fez (Bozdağlıoğlu, 2003, p. 49). Finally, on November 1928 (Akşin, 1997, p. 70), the Arabic script was replaced with Latin symbols, which was a major breakthrough decisively cutting the modern Turkey’s ties to its oriental past.

Although Turkey’s relations with the Soviet Union has remained normal in the first few years of the post-war era, Turkey’s agenda following strict Kemalist principles caused a disappointment in Moscow since Turkey did not adopt socialism after the revolution. Balcı (2017, p. 55) remarks that after successfully establishing a modern state, Turkey gave signals of two important messages to the Soviet Union: Firstly, it was asserted that it is not open to questioning the differences in political and ideological systems of both countries. Secondly, during the bilateral meetings of both countries, Ankara stressed that the relations should be limited within economic issues. At this point, Balcı (2017, p. 53) adds that the victory in the wake of War of Independence was achieved by masterfully using the rivalry between Soviet Union and Britain, rather than aligning Turkey with only one side. In this regard, Atatürk followed a pure realist/pragmatic policy; neither abandoned the economic relations with the Soviet Union, nor adopted an anti-Western agenda originating from motives of the Turkish War of Independence.

During the consolidation of the new system, building nation-state and implementing domestic reforms from top to bottom decelerated foreign policy practices since its foundations and principles were being formulated by the statesmen. Atatürk’s emphasis on reaching to the level of contemporary civilization and modernization put forth the example of European countries for the young Republic to be inspired (Erol & Ozan, 2011, p. 27). Also remarked by Erol and Ozan, Atatürk’s doctrine “peace at home, peace in the world” indicates a stable foreign policy which was supported by a policy of isolation from disputes among the international

powers. On the other hand, “the most important aim of the new Turkey was to join with all civilized nations in pursuit of peace and friendship” (Bozdağlıoğlu, 2003, p. 52).

As Keyman (2008, p. 157) suggested, Turkey pursued an active neutrality policy promoting peace and an agenda rejecting being a part of political struggles in the international relations. The era of status-quo seeking was followed by Turkey’s quest of committing itself to international organizations, pacts and agreements due to security concerns. Therefore, Turkey became a member of the League of Nations on 18 July 1932 (Erol & Ozan, 2011, p. 28). In 1934, the Balkan Entente was signed between Yugoslavia, Greece, Romania and Turkey, guaranteeing to ensure the security of the Balkan region and declaring that it will be protected in collaboration against any attack (Barlas & Vlačić, 2016, p. 1011). Furthermore, Turkey signed the pact of Saadabad with Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq to strengthen its friendly and close relations in the Middle East (Kumral, 2016, p. 63). Later, the process of integrating with the West continued with the trilateral agreement between France, Britain and Turkey in 1939 (Bozdağlıoğlu, 2003, p. 52), which reaffirmed and improved Turkey’s defensive position.

During the World War II, Turkey remained neutral until the outcome of the war was predictable, as “İnönü’s principal task was to steer the country safely through the world crisis” (Ahmad, 2003, p. 96). This decision was due to that he was a cautious leader who understood that the world order was changing radically, thus Turkey observed the circumstances of the World War II closely by remaining silent. After the war, although the demand was withdrawn by the Soviet Union one year later, Stalin’s verbal demand of taking over Ardahan and Kars; also, the lease of a Soviet base on Turkish Straits brought Turkey’s security concerns into the agenda once more (Ahmad, 2003, p. 105). When examined, it can be seen that policies of Atatürk era and İnönü era are parallel to a large extent. However, during the government of the Democratic Party (DP), Turkey’s commitment to the West advanced solidly with a new understanding of Westernism. Turkey’s Western integration continued with its recognition of the Israeli state immediately and its becoming a member of Council of Europe in 1949 (İlter, 2012, p. 30). Along with Turkey’s involvement into the Marshall Plan which was aiming to support devastated European countries financially for their reconstruction, Turkey’s bid to join the Western camp was strengthened (Zürcher, 2004, p. 209).

After the creation of NATO in 1949, the then-Prime Minister Menderes knew that Scandinavian countries were opposing the membership of Greece and Turkey with the claim that neither of these countries were Atlantic or democratic; therefore, he came up with a

solution: Turkey offered the United Nations to contribute with its troops to counter the invasion of the north in the Korean War (Zürcher, 2004, p. 235). Therefore, Turkey gained great degree of credits in the eyes of the NATO and the United States, then became a member of NATO in 1952. Along with its closeness to the Soviet Union which put Turkey into a strategic ally position for the United States to possess military bases in, Turkey has become an implementer of the US/NATO policies on the regional level, mostly in the Middle East region which Turkey had previously distanced itself from even its neighbors. Thereafter, Turkey made an application to the European Economic Community in 1959 (Balcı, 2017, p. 146). Turkey's foreign policy in Menderes era (1950-1960) was generated in parallel with the United States foreign policy, as Balcı (2017, p. 101) characterizes the period of Menderes as active Americanism and Turkey as the outpost ally of the United States. This argument can be supported with the then-President Celal Bayar's famous expression: "Turkey will be the little America in 30 years!" (Karadeniz, 2016).

On the one hand, the atmosphere of the Cold War put Turkey on an important position as a NATO member sharing a land border with the Soviet Union; on the other hand, Turkey's domestic politics were volatile to a degree since the implementation of the multi-party system, by reason of that the history of modern Turkey had witnessed a number of coup d'états, coup attempts, rivalry between political parties mainly opposition groups and governments. Executions of three ministers – Prime Minister Menderes, Foreign Minister Zorlu and Finance Minister Polatkan, following the military junta coup in 1960 marked these years as the era of political instability and at the same time the period when the political left emerged (Ahmad, 2003, pp. 127-128). Even though the military junta pursued a foreign policy engaged to the United States as well as the previous government, the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 and the Cyprus Issue in 1964 signaled the end of active Americanism and that not all interests of the United States and Turkey were convergent (Mengüaslan, 2016, pp. 61-62).

Turkey's military intervention to Cyprus in 1974 caused the start of an uneasy period of the United States and Turkey's bilateral relations (Balcı, 2017, p. 167). The military junta in Athens overthrown the first President of Cyprus Archbishop Makarios, and Turkish army stepped into the conflict following failure of the United Nations to intervene (Martin, 2015, p. 17). Turkish intervention was presented as invasion in the international community; as a result, the United States imposed an embargo on armament sales to Turkey (Bozdağlıoğlu, 2003, p. 68).

1980s has been very crucial years for Turkey, as it was the period when the economy played important role determining the foreign policy. Following the coup d'état in 1980, Turkey was governed by the military junta until the elections in 1983. In this first elections after the coup, only three political parties were allowed to take part (Zürcher, 2004, pp. 282-283). The Motherland Party's (MP) leader Turgut Özal, one of the most important figures in the Turkish history, became the Prime Minister. Zürcher draws attention to Özal's past as a successful manager in private industry and his very well connections to business circles, which welcomed Özal's neoliberal implementations in economy. In the party program of the MP, it was said that "Turkey should play a more active role in its relations with the West to enhance its economic growth. It is necessary for us to possess a strong defensive force. Its first precondition is to be powerful economically." (İlter, 2012, P. 36). Hence, Özal administration implemented series of reforms regarding liberalization of the trade by lifting quotas, privatization and lessening the state's economic activities by strengthening private sector. Furthermore, "Özal played an active part in pushing for Turkey's application to the European Community (EC) membership in 1987" (Öniş, 2004, p. 119). Öniş adds that the application was tactical, the rejection was already expected; however, it paved the way for Turkey to become a part of the Custom Union which accelerated the trade liberalization process.

Even though Turkish governments until the end of the Cold War predominantly pursued policies in line with Western agenda exerting to become a part of the international organizations, the Western responses to these efforts proceeded in a divergent way. Cyprus issue was the one of the first disputes to cause tensions with the West mainly Greece. Turkey's methods of combatting with terror, namely against the Kurdistan Worker's Party's (Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê – PKK) which started its actions towards the end of 1980s, also the United States House of Representatives' recognition of the Armenian Genocide were two following issues which has been the source of the dispute between the United States and Turkey (Balcı, 2017, p. 192). Since the Kemalist era, ideological principles and priorities have changed sharply surely considering the contrasts between state centered economy and neutral stance of the young Republic, and neo-liberal economy policies and commitment to the West; however, Turkey's security problems and the failures in the process of democratic transition have caused distortions in the relations with the United States. On the other hand, since the détente period, it could be observed that geo-strategic significance of Turkey to contain the Soviet threat diminished. As a result, the dissolution of the Union has changed Turkish calculations and paved the way for new foreign policy alternatives and identities to adopt further.

1.2 Islamism/Neo-Ottomanism

The Islamist identity of the Turkish foreign policy has never been able to realize its objectives visibly in the practical Turkish politics; from time to time especially after 1980, its presence appeared in the form of political Islam and Neo-Ottomanism, which are two interchangeable concepts in this thesis. It should be noted that Islamism and the third identity of Turkish foreign policy which will be elaborated below, Turkism, have been envisaged by politicians beginning from the 1980s until 2002, yet they have never been able to reach an influential level which could spark a quantitative and qualitative transformation until the era of the Justice and Development Party (JDP).

Neo-Ottomanism in this chapter should not be confused with the Ottomanism of the nineteenth century. Whilst the latter one was an Ottoman policy promoting equality among *the millets* (minority groups), the former is a view embarking on a quest to create a sphere of influence in the former territories of the Ottoman Empire, in other words, Muslim territories along with the Islamized parts. Yavuz (1998, p. 23) remarks the two faces of Neo-Ottomanism: “One face looks back to an invented Ottoman-Islamic past as a Turk-made epoch. The other looks forward to a vision of a regionally dominant industrialized, but not necessarily civic and democratic, Turkey”.

Starting with Özal administration, traces of Islam can be found in the discourses of daily politics and foreign policy. Özal’s Islamist and liberal stance led the Islamist bloc to challenge the Kemalist bloc and their principles for the first time (Küçükboz, 2015, p. 462) since the young Republic had previously marginalized Islamic identity and Ottoman past. Balcı (2017, p. 209) states that the new foreign policy identity introduced a firm discourse based on historical legacy, Islamic identity and the Ottoman past and later became a powerful alternative to counter Kemalist identity which ruptured Ottoman/Islamic past. Unlike his predecessors, Özal brought a brand-new vision in terms of Turkish identity and legacy with these words:

“When we look at this geopolitical space from the Adriatic Sea to Central Asia under the leadership of Turkey, we realize that this space is molded and dominated by Ottoman-Muslim and Turkic population... The Ottoman-Muslim population shares the same historical legacy and fate as the Turks of Anatolia and they still regard themselves as “Turk” in the religio-cultural sense. These groups live in Bosnia, Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia and Western Trace.” (Yavuz, 1998, p. 24)

He perceived Islam as a unifying element and a reminder of the shared historical experience of the Ottoman past regardless of divergent factors among Muslim groups. Not only the program of the Motherland Party, the following coalition governments adopted Özal's considerations as well. Hence, Turkey actively supported Bosnian Muslims and initiated diplomatic and military measures during the Bosnian War between 1992 and 1995, in a time when the traditional Turkish state identity was questioned widely (Coşkun, 2011, p. 5). Yet, it is worth mentioning that neither Özal nor following coalition governments undermined the process of Westernization for the sake of Neo-Ottomanism or political Islam.

With the introduction of the multi-party system, following the success of the Democrat Party, it was revealed that the backbone of the center-right parties was strengthened with the support of the religious voters (Yıldız, 2003, p. 187). Yıldız adds that afterwards the political arena was familiarized with the pro-Islamist rhetoric with the National Order Party (NOP) (1970-71) and the National Salvation Party (NSP) (1972-1980), and later with the Welfare Party (WP) (1983-1998). The WP and its ideological movement of the National Outlook built their discourse on the basis of Islamic sentiment standing against the Westernization process and Western oriented international relations policies (Köker, 1996). The WP became the first pro-Islamist party to receive the highest number of votes in the elections of 1996 and led the coalition government along with the True Path Party (TPP) (GNAT, 1996). In the party program of the WP published in 1995, it was emphasized that Turkey should have a place in a union of World's Muslim countries, not in the European Union which was founded as a Christian club (GNAT, 1995).

During the WP-led coalition government, one of the most important endeavor was the establishment of the D-8 (Developing 8) with participation of Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan and Turkey, as an alternative to the G-7 (Bilgin, 2008, p. 410). Another important point is that the then-Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan did not visit any Western country during his governmental term (Bilgin, 2008, p. 411). Although political Islam has found itself a context in Turkish foreign policy formulation, on the practical level it was limited since the WP did not pursue an entirely Islamist agenda.

The dissolution of the Soviet Union led to a loosening the political power in the Balkans, Caucasus and the Middle East which paved the way for the Turkish foreign policy-makers to be faced with Ottoman Empire's Islamist, historic and cultural extensions (Küçükboz, 2015, p. 461). Therefore, this face-off enabled Turkey to problematize Kemalist legacy while

victimizing the Ottoman past. The WP and its predecessor parties introduced the political Islam for the first time; however, Turkey's Western identity in the foreign policy making was not still shaken until the era of the JDP. The then-Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmet Davutoğlu formulated the theoretical and intellectual foreign policy background of the JDP and created the doctrine of Strategic Depth, which places Turkey in a specific position, emphasizing geo-strategic and geo-economic advantages which Turkey possesses (Balci & Yeşiltaş, 2011, p. 12). His vision and proactive foreign policy practices pursuing Neo-Ottomanism will further be elaborated in the chapter 4.

1.3 Nationalism/Turkism

The third traditional identity of Turkish foreign policy is Turkism or referred as Pan-Turkism from time to time which is based on ethno-nationalism. Uzer (2011, p. 34) incisively categorized Turkish nationalism into three groups: Kemalist nationalism, ethnic nationalism and conservative nationalism. Nationalism, being one of the six main principles of Kemalism, indicates no ethnically-related denotation according to Atatürk. Ethnic and conservative nationalism on the other hand, have been observed from the times of the Ottoman Empire until contemporary Turkish politics. Although this tradition was quite popular in the last period of the Ottoman Empire, it lost its popularity after the establishment of the Republic in 1923 (Erşen, 2017a, p. 267).

The ethno-nationalistic Turkism first became popular for the first time among the Volga Tatars in the sixteenth century against Russian hegemony and assimilation policies of Alexandr III (Yücel, 2012, p. 43). It appeared again during the declining trend of the Ottoman Empire, as a recipe to elaborate the options for the recovery. One of the most influential figure among the Turkist cycles is Yusuf Akçura, who is a Volga Tatar himself. He wrote the book *Three Policies*, a nationalistic manifest, in which he analyzed Ottomanism, Islamism and Turkism (Türkman, 2003, p. 136). He further remarked that it is necessary to create a national economy and bourgeoisie to be able to progress. Another important nationalist figure is Ziya Gökalp, whose ideals drew inspiration during the phase of construction of the Republic. In his article series, *Turkism, Islamism and Modernism*, he described Turkishness as an embracing umbrella over Ottomanism and Islamism, thus unification under the discourse of Turkism would vis-à-vis glorify all three concepts (Akıllı, 2013, p. 39). However, after Kemalism's policy of Westernization prevailed, Gökalp and his ideals lost their weight, despite the fact that he advocated a partial Westernization, through which Western science and technical skills would

be adopted but customs and traditions peculiar to Turkish people would not be harmed or modernized (Yücel, 2012, p. 46).

In spite of shared language, history, and ethnic ties, until the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Turkey paid little attention to Turkic people of Central Asia (Bozdağlıoğlu, 2003, pp. 96-97). Due to internal stalemate in newly established Russian Federation, Russia couldn't exert its influence on independent Central Asian Republics, in which Turkey started to expand its economic, political and cultural power. Also, Bozdağlıoğlu adds that Turkey became the first country to recognize Central Asian Republics' independence in 1991. On the other hand, the then-President Süleyman Demirel's declaration of a Turkish world in the process of foundation from Adriatic Sea to the Great Wall of China met with reaction in Balkans and Russia (Erol, 2007, p. 42). Moreover, the positive manners of the Turkic politicians towards Turkish leaders was indeed gave rise to excitement. To illustrate, "Uzbek president Islam Kerimov called Demirel his elder brother, and Kyrgyz president Askar Akayev characterized Ankara as the morning star guiding all the newly-independent states" (Uzer, 2011, p. 158).

Consequently, during the first few years after the independence of ex-Soviet states, the Turkish discourse towards the Turkic world was inconvenient and imperialistic, yet the state strategy had no imperialistic motives. If considered the multi-dimensional position of Turkey, it can be argued that the discourse of the politicians towards the Turkic world was motivated by the EU's negative response to Turkey's application for the membership in 1989 (Bozdağlıoğlu, 2003, p. 96). Still, Pan-Turkist discourse had no repercussions in the Turkic countries' political agenda, as their leaders were decisive to protect their own national interest, rather than advocating Pan-Turkist policies (Uzer, 2011, p. 159).

Efforts to establish relationships with the Central Asian countries and other Turkic communities have changed its form to more cultural based exercise of the soft power in contemporary Turkish politics. Starting with the period of Turkey's reconciliation with Russia, it was enabled to progress with bilateral contacts, friendship agreements and common initiatives with Central Asian countries.

2. Methodology and Theory

2.1 Qualitative Content Analysis

The issue of Turkey's foreign policy change during the JDP era is a fertile area of research for the scholars, especially if we consider the fact that JDP government is only one of its own kind in the post-Cold War Turkey, proposed major changes and achieved leap forward in certain areas. Not only its foreign policy decisions, but also domestic policies, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's idiosyncratic leadership and political manner, Turkey's continuous but fluctuant relations with the European Union, and Turkey's role in the Middle Eastern turmoil made this era very attractive for academics of political science, sociology and international relations. Thus, there are substantial numbers of studies available.

Since this issue is a current one in foreign policy studies, the literature on it is becoming richer and richer as time passes by. Therefore, I used recently published books and articles written on the issue of contemporary Turkish foreign policy as reference. Furthermore, online articles and newspaper opinion columns have helped me as secondary source to support my arguments. The primary sources which are mostly comprised of the political party programs and government documents, on the other hand, are useful to determine the change in the rhetoric and the priorities given in each governmental term.

In this thesis, qualitative content analysis (Neuendorf, 2004) was chosen as the method to reveal how changing foreign policy of the JDP was conceptualized through introducing new terms such as strategic depth, center state, proactive and rhythmic diplomacy and zero problem with neighbors (Balcı & Yeşiltaş, 2011). The theoretical framework of the thesis is based on constructivist approach to identity issues and Charles Hermann's foreign policy change model. This framework enables me to adopt an analytical approach towards change, thus to assess and categorize the scope of the change based on foreign policy practices of the JDP.

2.2 Constructivist Approach and Charles Hermann's Foreign Policy Change Model

The rationalist classical theories in international relations treat national identity and state as inseparable elements. Kowert notes that (1998, pp. 1-2), realist and liberal theories suggest that the states determine their interests through identities and vice versa. He adds that, correspondingly, an unraveled state identity might have implications such as "civil wars, spin-

off crises, changing alliance patterns, the dissolution of existing states, and the constitution of new ones". Therefore, definitions of interest are essential to understand the concept of identity perceived by theories of international relations. However, in this work, constructivist theory will be taken into account as the theoretical basis, since this approach included the notion of identity in international relations theory comprehensively (Erol & Ozan, 2011, p. 17).

In the post-Cold War period, constructivist studies in international relations have drawn much attention, as they put forth the notions such as *norms*, *identities*, *values*, and claimed that certain aspects in international relations are historically and socially constructed. One of the most prominent constructivist scholars, Alexander Wendt (1999, p. 231) argues that identities precede national interest, since an actor is not capable of formulate what it wants without knowing who is it. According to him, national identity which is formed based on historical experiences, intertwines with foreign policy identity, which is formed based on states' interactions with other actors, and determine the foreign policy behaviors of the states.

Opposing to neo-realists, Wendt argues that states do not construct their national identities and interests, due to the pressure of international system; in other words, identity formation occurs on the basis of actors' interactions and is not forcibly imposed by the external factors. In this regard, identity's impact is quite notable in determining an actor's position and function in international system in a specific time, its foreign policy instruments, goals, aspirations and methods (Yücel, 2012, pp. 15-16). Especially, considering that the identity and foreign policy are two concepts organically linked to each other from the constructivist point of view, the case of Turkey singles itself out since it holds a unique geographical position and hosts multiple numbers of ethnic groups with different customs, traditions and identities.

Bozdağlıoğlu (2003, p. 4) masterfully explicates the case of Turkey through the lens of Alexander Wendt's social constructivist arguments and suggests that Turkey's foreign policy was Western-oriented and its decision to integrate into the West was rooted from the Turkish national identity, which was constructed with elements of the West in the following years after the Turkish War of Independence. Consequently, elaborating Turkish case from the constructivist point of view would be accurate, since it is a country that has a strong collective memory and constructed its identity through shared national history and narratives.

With regards to the foreign policy, the notion of change has long been a point of attention among the scholars of political science and international relations. Jakob Gustavsson (1999)

examined 6 models created based on these studies and aimed to reveal why governments change their foreign policy. He splits these models into three broad categories: checklist models, structural constraints models and cyclical models (p. 77).

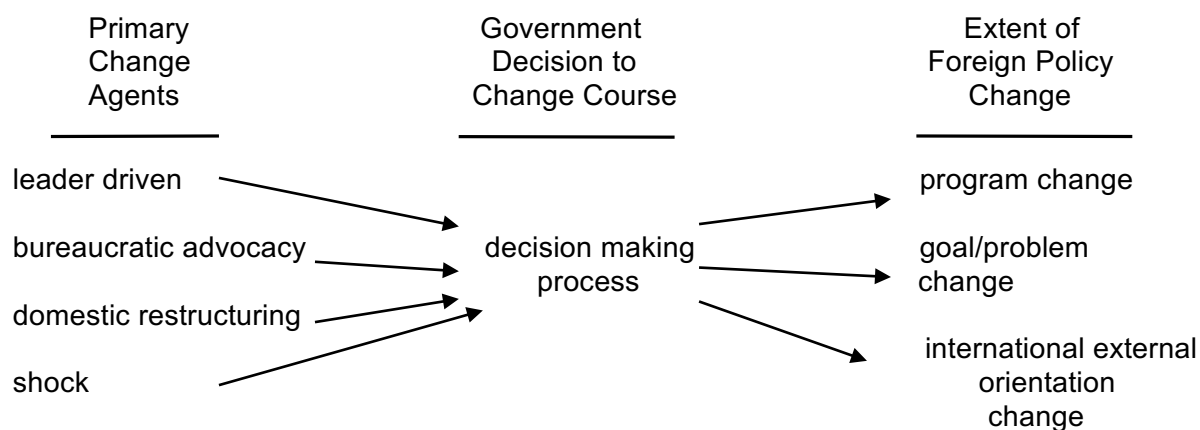
Charles Hermann's (1990) foreign policy change model is located in the checklist model group according to Gustavsson (1999). The triggering factors in checklist models have been presented as analytical tools for empirical studies, yet they have not been ranked according to the order of importance. His study analyzes sources of change, decision-making process and the extent of change all together, thus is substantial to reveal how, why and to what extent it takes place.

Hermann (1990, pp. 11-12) examines foreign policy change behavior first by proposing four labels to categorize sources of change: "leader driven, bureaucratic advocacy, domestic restructuring and external shocks". Leader driven changes are described as "results from the determined efforts of an authoritative policy-maker" while bureaucratic advocacy refers to a group among the government officials which becomes a proponent of redirection. Hermann points to that it is not necessary that the entire government aspire the change. Domestic restructuring refers to a segment of society becoming involved with the political restructuring, thus creates an impact upon government. Lastly, Hermann describes external shocks as "sources of foreign policy change that result from dramatic international events".

In the outcome phase, Hermann proposes a change typology to assess the nature and extent of the foreign policy change (p. 5). Four graduated levels according to Hermann are the following: "adjustment changes", "program changes", "problem/goal changes", and "international orientation changes". Adjustment changes refer to minor changes reflect in the level of foreign policy making effort, such as greater or lesser effort. Methods and purpose are not subject to change. Qualitative changes that occur with the introduction of new statecraft instruments are categorized as program changes. With this kind of change, the purpose is not redesigned unlike methods and instruments. Herman exemplifies this with using diplomatic means instead of military force to pursue a foreign policy goal. The third level is problem/goal change. This kind of change occurs only when the problem orientation of the policy changes or in case of disappearance of the problem entirely. The most extreme form of change is international orientation change. Hermann adds that "orientation change involves a basic shift in the actor's international role and activities" (p. 6). As demonstrated in Figure 1, Hermann

specifies the linkage between processes between the agents, decision-making phase and the outcome of the foreign policy change.

Figure 1. The mediating role of decision process between change agents and degree of policy change



Source: Hermann, 1990, p. 13

Providing a wide variety of categories defining foreign policy change ranging from minor adjustments to international orientation changes, Hermann's model is quite useful to conduct an analytical study regarding the JDP era, since it enables researcher to evaluate the change through the outcome. Therefore, in this thesis, Charles Hermann's foreign policy change model will be used as the theoretical guide as it proposes a clear distinction between different types of changes.

3. Europeanization under the JDP: Accelerated Determination in the Turkish Foreign Policy

1990s have been years for Turkey when the economic and internal security struggles took place. Between 1991 and 2002, seven coalition governments served the country; none of them achieved to offer a new vision or to avoid the damaging economic crises of 1994, 1999 and 2001. With the re-emergence of the PKK and its continuous cross-border attacks targeting both military units and civilians, tens of thousands of people lost their lives and already damaged Turkish economy was hit by the cost of \$90 billion caused by fight against the PKK (Başer, 2015, p. 292). Also, with the end of the Cold War, the issue of change in the foreign policy became a popular discussion topic all around the world, as the political atmosphere entailed to prioritize regional security and cooperation; however, Turkish coalition governments of the 1990s failed to hear this alert.

In November 2002, the JDP won a landslide victory in the general elections by receiving 34 % of the popular votes, while three parties that had formed the previous government failed to pass 10 % election threshold (Gumuscu & Keyman, 2014, p. 33). This was a message from the fed-up people to the previous governments that a fresh discourse in the politics will be given chance to get through distressing conditions.

During the 16 years of the JDP government, multiple efforts have been observed in order to revive a new style of nationalism which was based on Islamic values and history inherited by the Ottoman Empire. By removing the economic borders with the Balkan, Caucasian and Middle Eastern countries, the JDP did not aim to revive the Ottoman Empire, but to create a macro-identity which comprises of the Ottoman past and its values descended. These efforts of the JDP government brought about questions on whether the Turkish foreign policy is moving away from its traditional line. On the other hand, it should be noted that, the JDP's foreign policy put a special emphasis on Turkey's European integration and promotion of good relations with the Western allies, whilst turning its face to its historical allies in the East.

In this and the following chapters, 16 years of the JDP government will be scrutinized in terms of its foreign policy. Especially, if considered the ongoing debate regarding whether Turkey has been experiencing an axis shift or not, evaluating the foreign policy change of the JDP government through foreign policy practices and sharp turns will help me to detect the nature of Turkey's foreign policy change. Hermann's fourfold categorization of foreign policy

change model will be used to answer the research question. The JDP won four consecutive general elections in 2002, 2007, 2011 and 2015 with landslide victories. Therefore, in this and the following chapters, not only the foreign policy change of Turkey in general, but also the change between each governmental period of the JDP will be looked at. In this regard, the impact of the Turkish national identity on major foreign policy decisions is going to be interpreted.

As was mentioned previously, the JDP was founded by the former cadre of the Islamist WP and NSP. However, the JDP cadre declared a rupture from their past, enabling to form a new ideology that is welcoming a pro-Western agenda, as opposed by the WP. In the JDP's 2002 election manifest, it was asserted that the JDP government is committed to fulfill all of its obligations and requirements demanded by the EU to pave the way for full membership (p. 92). Also, it was mentioned that Turkey's contribution to the body of the NATO is desired to be complemented with Turkey's participation in the Common Security and Defense Policy of the EU. It was clear from the beginning that the JDP aimed following an active agenda with vigorous steps towards the EU membership, just as the previous governments tried but could not complete.

Ziya Öniş (2008, p. 38) marks the period between 2002 and 2005 as "the golden age of Europeanization", pointing out to that along with economic leap forward Turkey diligently stepped towards consolidating the democracy. Although Turkey's road to the EU was opened at the Helsinki Summit in 1999, when Turkey received candidate status by the EU; major steps were taken after a comprehensive harmonization package was offered to Turkey at the Copenhagen Summit in 2002 (Ata, 2017, p. 107). The significant outcome of the summit involved determining an exact date for opening up accession negotiations and by that time Turkey was expected to carry out certain reforms, in other words to do list, in order to comply with the EU conditionality (Öniş, 2003, p. 31).

Between 2002 and 2004, 8 harmonization and 2 constitutional amendment packages were approved by the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (GNAT) (Türkiye-AB İlişkilerinin Tarihçesi, 2017). These packages comprised of progressive regulations considerably fortifying the rule of law and civil and human rights in Turkey. The most notable ones are the abolition of the death penalty, and relatedly, efforts to recognize Kurdish identity and providing cultural rights to minorities such as broadcasting in their own languages and use of those languages in education (Öniş, 2008, p. 39). By doing so, the JDP has not only achieved to coming close to

the EU membership first time in history, but also gaining large extent support of the Kurdish people. Also, other reforms to enable greater freedom of expression, release of political prisoners and restrictions on police forces to use excessive violence were pushed (Demirdağ, 2015, p. 236). Keyman and Gumuscu adds that “the government also accepted the supremacy of the European Court of Human Rights over domestic jurisdiction, and thus acknowledged citizens’ right to retrial in cases where the Turkish courts are in conflict with the European Act of Human Rights” (2014, p. 39).

In the wake of Brussels Summit in 2004, which is considered as a milestone in Turkey-EU relations, it was approved that Turkey fulfilled the political conditionality requirements (Türkiye-AB İlişkilerinin Tarihçesi, 2017). The determined stance that was carried forward by bold reforms were complemented with political figures’ positive expressions on the EU. To illustrate, the then-Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan expressed that the JDP has shown an outstanding success, proving that a Muslim country can be modern by introducing extensive democracy to its people, ensuring transparency of the public administration and practicing extensive human rights regulations (Sunar, 2013, p. 437). Although it seemed that the JDP has abandoned its *National Vision shirt*, emphasis on Islamic identity was still observable in the JDP discourse, even when the topic is the EU.

Europeanization efforts and the bid to join to the EU can be traced back to previous governments of the 1990s. However, there are several reasons why the JDP was successful in taking advantage of this discourse: First reason is the committed posture of the JDP regarding the democratization process and the leader cadre’s emphasis on democratic consolidation through major reforms such as eliminating the death penalty (Öniş & Yilmaz, 2009, p. 8). Also, Bozdağlıoğlu (2003, p. 92) points to that during the 1990s, the discussion of Turkey-EU relations was centered on Turkish culture and its incompatibility with the European culture, mainly the Islamic dimension. Yet, in the JDP period, the relations were regarded principally through economic and political considerations.

The second reason is the effective economic measures implemented by the JDP, along with the EU anchor and International Monetary Fund (IMF)-prescribed reforms causing high rates of economic growth (Öniş & Yilmaz, 2009, p. 8). Turkey’s committed performance to comply with *the EU acquis* has not only introduced effective economic measures but also increased reliability on Turkey, and relatedly, foreign direct investment from the EU countries

grew significantly. Fiscal and monetary adjustments were made, and the inflation rate dropped to single digit number after decades (Öniş, 2008, p. 38).

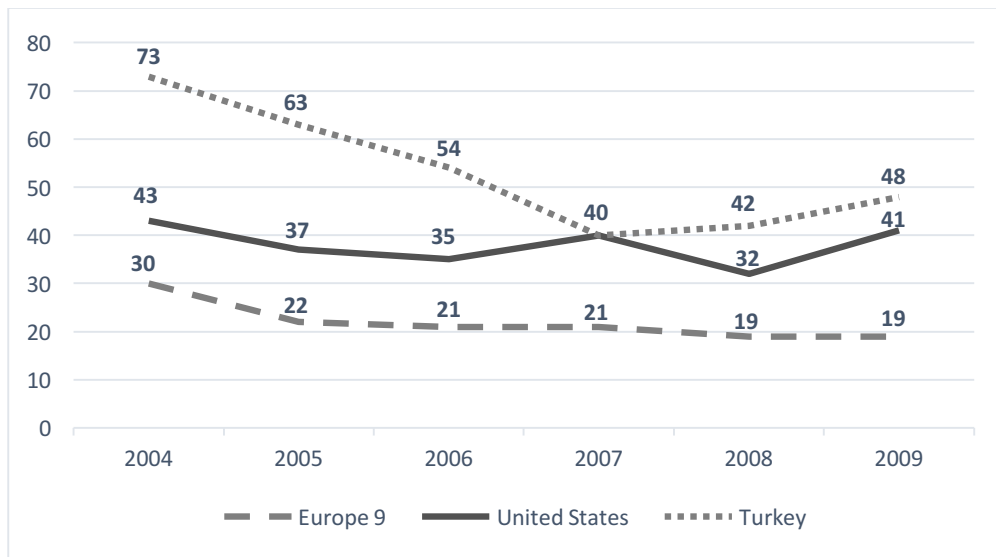
Third reason stems from the clash between the internal dynamics of Turkey and the background of the JDP. By advocating effective democratization and emphasizing *European values*, the JDP showed that it is committed to fulfil what the EU requires: stronger civilian control of the military. Based on Kemalist establishment inherited from the first years of the Republic, the Turkish military is considered as the ultimate guarantor of the secular system (Rabasa & Larrabee, 2008, p. 80), thus have substantial power in decision-making. On 28 February 1997, the National Security Council which comprises of the military elites and president, decided to implement certain policies against the rising power of the Islamist WP and its influence on spreading of radical Islam (Altunışık & Tür, 2005, p. 60). Later called as *post-modern coup*, these measures prove that the military had a noteworthy power or pressure on the governments, whenever the secular system is to be challenged.

Having learned its lesson from 1997, the JDP played the game according to the rules by basing their reforms aiming to transform civilian-military relations upon the Copenhagen Criteria of 1993 (Demirdaş, 2015, p. 235). As a result of the seventh harmonization package, the JDP achieved to change the role and composition of the National Security Council and transformed the council to an advisory board. The JDP had used its foreign policy means and the determined stance towards the EU membership and support of the EU as instruments to achieve its domestic goals.

It is surely expected that an escalation of progress would be followed by a period of stagnation. A notable decrease in Turkey's eagerness to join the EU then started in the post-2005 period, although it was a prioritized policy of the JDP government when it was first propelled to the power. It was not only on the governmental level, but also the public opinion favoring the EU membership decreased remarkably (Figure 2). The EU's enthusiasm on the other hand also diminished especially in Germany and France, where large Turkish minority reside. It is an indication that demonstrates Europe's concerns over large numbers of inflows from the Muslim countries. Nicolas Sarkozy's victory in the French Presidential Elections of 2007 was one other barrier in front of Turkey, as he strongly opposed Turkey's bid to join the EU; whereas the former President Jacques Chirac was in favor of it (Rabasa & Larrabee, 2008, p. 78). The most important obstacle is that the large population of Turkey, which could be a

burden on the EU in case of Turkey's full membership, due to free movement rights of the Turkish labor within the EU borders.

Figure 2. Would it be good for Turkey to join the EU?



Source: Transatlantic Trends: Key Findings, 2009, p. 25

One other major obstacle appeared due to Greek-Turkish relations and the Cyprus issue which is stemmed from a Mediterranean island being split by Greek (south) and Turkish (north) residents. In the Helsinki Summit of 1999, it was agreed that unless a political resolution regarding to unify or not does not appear on the horizon, the EU will decide the membership of Cyprus independently from this dispute. Therefore, Turkey felt a certain pressure to solve this dispute due to time limitations. The Annan Plan or the Cyprus Unification Plan was the greatest hope to resolve the conflict, as it was prepared by taking into account both sides' demands. The plan was named after Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN), as he prepared it himself by revising it multiple times. On both sides of the island, on different dates, two referendums were held to ask the people their opinion about this resolution, which was proposing a federation of two equal states. The Turkish Cypriots said yes by 65 % of popular votes, whereas the Greek Cypriots declined the resolution with only 24 % in favor (Balci, 2017, p. 298). Eventually, the plan was not initiated and the problem remains unresolved today.

The EU's handling of the dispute was highly criticized by both Turkish politicians and the public, since the Turkish Cypriots accepted the United Nations plan; however, the EU did not lift the trade embargo on the Turkish Republic of the Northern Cyprus (Larrabee, 2010, p.

174). On 1 May 2004, with the largest enlargement of the EU, the Republic of Cyprus joined the EU and this development led to the loss of enthusiasm of the Turkish state due to unbalanced approach of the EU. In December 2006, the EU Council decided to suspend 8 chapters of the 35 in total, on the grounds that Turkey failed to fulfil its obligations (Ata, 2017, p. 113). This decision was criticized by Turkey as it was a politicized one, since Turkey refused to open its ports to vessels from Cyprus, and the decision came out as an answer (Larrabee, 2010, p. 174). Consequently, the golden age of Europeanization came to an end, and it became a widespread thought among public that even though Turkey was to become successful implementing reforms compatible with the EU *acquis*, it was never going to be allowed within the Union.

In this section, the main purpose is to find out on what extent that the JDP foreign policy differentiated with the previous government, since it is the first period the JDP came into the power. Based on Charles Hermann's (1990, p. 5) foreign policy change typology, adjustment changes are described as the following:

"Changes occur in the level of effort (greater or lesser) and/or in the scope of recipients (such as refinement in the class of targets). What is done, how it is done, and the purposes for which it is done remain unchanged."

Although the JDP's discourse remained similar as the previous government's discourse on the EU membership, the level of determination and efforts were notably increased after 2002. When compared with the previous government, the JDP has followed a more confident route first by demanding a date for the start of the accession talks at the Copenhagen Summit in 2002, although the result was obtaining *a date for date*. Taking into account that the EU policy of the JDP was sharply changed after the EU Council's decision in 2006, evaluating the JDP's first governmental period (2002-2007) as a whole would not indicate an accurate finding. Therefore, I find it more coherent to label the change in policies of the period between 2002 and 2005, as adjustment changes. During the period that the change occurred, the governmental discourse moved away from nationalistic point of view, especially with regards to Cyprus issue, and turned political and pragmatic; whereas previous governments followed a nationalistic approach, rejecting a federative republic in Cyprus.

In addition to the increased level of effort and desire to join the EU during the JDP's first term, the position of the Turkish government in its negotiation with the EU had changed drastically. Since Turkey's involvement to the NATO in 1952, Turkey continuously followed

a Western-focused agenda and, from time to time, it found itself in positions that only making concessions would made it closer to the West. Although the JDP implemented reforms based on the EU's demands, after 2006, it openly criticized the unbalanced attitude of the EU and stopped compromising under unequal circumstances. One of the main reason for that is, as argued by Balcı (2017, p. 302), that the JDP no longer needed the EU to restore its hegemony over the Kemalist establishment and the Turkish Armed Forces. Throughout 3 years of golden age of Europeanization, the JDP already achieved to disable the military courts, diminish powers of institutions that are the guarantors of secularism, and consolidate its conservative Islamist power. After Turkey's journey to the EU came to an impasse, the JDP's Islamic/conservative identity has become prominent and influenced its activism in the foreign policy making, mostly in parallel to the JDP's domestic agenda.

4. Rise of Neo-Ottomanism and Davutoğlu Era: Strategic Depth

After 2007, the foreign policy of the JDP was highly influenced by Ahmet Davutoğlu and his ideas. Ahmet Davutoğlu, an academic and politician, was appointed as the chief advisor to the Prime Minister by the then-Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in 2003. Although his ideas became influential after the Turkey-EU relations entered into a period of recession, his vision of foreign policy, namely Strategic Depth, was already on the scene in 2002 as the theoretical basis of the new Turkish foreign policy. In his book, “Strategic Depth: Turkey’s International Position”, published in 2001, he defines Turkey’s new geopolitical position in the emerging world order according to necessities of the post-Cold War era and draws a strategic path for Turkey to become a central power. The Strategic Depth term stresses the significance of Turkey’s geo-strategic, geopolitical and geo-economic potential with regards to the world politics.

As the architect of the new Turkish foreign policy, for which I limit the period between the years of 2007 and 2016 when his impact reached to peak, Davutoğlu provided an extensive theoretical framework in his book thorough the eyes of an academic. He suggested to re-interpret the Turkish foreign policy and the surrounding strategic sphere due to transformed international system and diminished risks. In contrast to the mainstream interpretation of Turkey’s international position, which draws a bridge image for Turkey as a linking geography lying between Islamic world and the West, Davutoğlu (2008, p. 79) describes Turkey as a Middle Eastern, Balkan, Caucasian, Central Asian, Caspian, Mediterranean, Gulf and Black Sea country. Therefore, he rejects the term bridge, since it draws attention to the strategic interests of other powers (Grigoriadis, 2010, p. 4). Davutoğlu (2008, p. 78) points out that Turkey’s position is so specific that it is both Asian and European, also it has access to Africa through Eastern Mediterranean. He adds that such central country cannot define itself through a defensive approach.

Davutoğlu’s another definition for Turkey is “a modern nation-state which was built on the legacy of the Ottoman Empire which was one of the eight multi-national empire that dominated Eurasian continent” (2001, p. 7). Rather than pointing out the proclamation of the modern-state in 1923, he prefers to mention the Ottoman legacy intentionally to emphasize that there is a continuation from the times of the Ottoman Empire until today, on the contrary to the founding Kemalist principles of the Republic of Turkey which always aimed rupturing from

the Ottoman past. This aspect shows that the Strategic Depth does not only present a geopolitical guideline, but also has national identity dimension.

Davutoğlu advocated that Turkey should pursue a pro-active foreign policy due to its geographic and historical depths, and only by doing so it can become a central power, not only regionally but also, more importantly, globally (Demirdaş, 2015, p. 261). According to Davutoğlu (2008), this pro-active brand new foreign policy has five fundamental principles to benefit from the geographical position and historical assets. These principles are balance between freedom and security, zero problem policy toward Turkey's neighbors, multi-dimensional foreign policy, to develop relations with the neighboring regions, and rhythmic diplomacy. He proposed uncommon terms and roles for Turkey such as "soft power, order-building actor, wise country and mediation". (Balcı & Yeşiltaş, 2011). According to the Strategic Depth, Turkey should seek to absorb the notions of the West, while it is facing with its eastern identity. Therefore, Davutoğlu objects to Samuel Huntington's (1993, p. 48) "torn country" portrayal of Turkey, further states that Turkey's multi-dimensional identity will enable itself to reunite the torn world (Kaya, 2015, p. 66).

The first principle, balance between security and democracy, is needed according to Davutoğlu, since he believes that "security should not be at the expense of freedoms and human rights in the country" (2008, p. 79). In the post-9/11 era, Turkey has drawn a successful example, capable of balancing its efforts to fight against terrorism without curtailing individual civil and political rights (Sözen, 2010, p. 115). Therefore, this principle emphasizes the importance of democracy and that the new foreign policy would prioritize individual freedoms by changing the perception of security and threat. Also, it has aspired to influence other regional countries, especially Middle Eastern ones, to adopt democracy, and eventually leaders of those countries would be able to legitimize their power in the eyes of the international political arena.

In the post-Soviet period, Turkey came to the edge of wars with three of its neighbors: Armenia, Greece and Syria in 1992, 1996 and 1998 respectively. These developments caused Turkey to have tense relations from time to time with its neighbors on the basis of mutual distrust and feeling of insecurity. Yet, there were efforts of the Turkish government to avoid unnecessary tension and to re-establish cooperation and trust, before the JDP came to power. Especially after the leader of the PKK, Abdullah Öcalan, was forced to move out from Syria and captured in Kenya, in 1999; many initiatives to improve relations of Turkey and Syria were taken. Hafez Al-Assad government at that time in Syria was also enthusiastic to strengthen ties

with their Turkish counterparts, which resulted with the exchange of high-level visits and military training agreement signed in July 2002 (Özcan, 2012, p. 60).

The second principle, zero problems with the neighbors became the most outstanding one of the Davutoğlu era. He articulated the idea that Turkey should wipe out all of its problems with neighbors, at least minimize them, in order to cohere with the first principle, which is balance between security and freedom. In a newspaper article (Türkiye merkez ülke olmalı, 2004), Davutoğlu asserted that “Turkey should get rid of the hysteria of “Turkey is always surrounded by enemies” and of the defensive reflexes generated through such hysteria”. This strategy aimed to create a stability belt around Turkey. At the same time, it was expected to enable Turkey to act as a regional and global hub, where energy, trade and labor routes intersect (Balcı, 2017, p. 288).

According to Davutoğlu (2008, p. 80), the most successful examples of this policy in its first four years after implementation were Turkey’s relations with Georgia and Syria. Mostly based on intense economic interdependence, Turkey and Syria lifted visa regime and signed more than fifty agreements along with the free trade deal (Özcan, 2012, p. 60). Moreover, Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway project carried out with Georgia and the development of Batumi Airport functioning as a domestic airport were other success stories of this policy mentioned by Davutoğlu, without a fear of imperial expansion coming into question.

The policy of zero problems with neighbors introduced new terms for Turkey during the JDP era. The most striking term is the notion of soft power, which was built on three main principles: historical and cultural links with the countries in the region, democratic institutions and tradition, and growing free market economy (Balcı, 2017, p. 288). Therefore, Davutoğlu asserted that the exercise of merely military power would not bring desirable results, if it is not employed in coherence with the soft power (2008, p. 86). His major criticism of the Kemalist state tradition is that the founders of the Republic abandoned Islamic identity and politics, which limited Turkey’s capabilities to strengthen its global position and compelled it to play a defensive, passivated role (2001, p.61). Thus, he claims that Turkey should re-build its identity, psyche and political culture to utilize its potential (2001, p. 93). For this reason, as Davutoğlu (2012, p. 5) expressed in his policy paper, while setting Turkey’s goal as to become a wise country, the JDP wanted to utilize abovementioned instruments which were not in the basket of traditional Turkish foreign policy means.

The third principle is to pursue multi-dimensional and multi-track policies. Especially during the Cold War era, Turkish foreign policy followed a security-based policy which was mostly based on a mono-track agenda. However, after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the world politics became much more dynamic, and economic interdependence gained a lot of attention. Sözen remarks that the Turkish foreign policy makers started to take advantage of powerful individuals and institutions by involving them in the processes, and he further exemplifies this with the constructive role played by powerful Turkish NGOs such as the Turkish Industry and Business Association (TUSIAD) and the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) in lobbying to launch accession talks with the EU (2006, pp. 20-21). Davutoğlu pursued an active and multi-dimensional foreign policy in his term, aiming to preserve Turkey's position in the Atlantic alliance, whilst developing its engagement with its eastern partners and the Middle Eastern neighbors (Demirağ & Özpek, 2012, p. 118). Thus, it can be said that Davutoğlu considers this principle as a must for Turkey to initiate foreign policy activism in order to achieve the perceived role as a central power.

The fourth principle of the Strategic Depth is to develop relations with the neighboring regions, which extend to the Balkans, the Middle East, Central Asia and the Caucasus (Davutoğlu, 2008, p. 81). Along with Turkey's desire to become an active player in those regions, he mentioned the PKK as a security obstacle threatening Turkey's opportunities to extend its influence in the Middle East. Nevertheless, he regarded this policy as a very successful one between 2003 and 2008 and exemplified it with Turkey's diplomatic activism towards Lebanon during the Lebanon crisis. Furthermore, Turkey took careful steps during the Sunni-Shia tension in Iraq, by involving itself in the seven-country meeting organized by Pakistan's President Musharraf, yet not taking sides against Iran or Shia groups in Iraq.

The last principle of the Strategic Depth is rhythmic diplomacy. Davutoğlu (2008, p. 83) explains Turkey's international goals with regards to the new vision of rhythmic diplomacy with the following words:

"Turkey's aim is to intervene consistently in global issues using international platforms, which signifies a transformation for Turkey from a central country to a global power. It should be underlined that this transformation is the result of the performance of all actors involved in foreign policy. Turkey's success is not only the results of state policies, but also the activities of civil society, business organizations, and numerous other organizations, all operating under the guidance of the new vision."

Although this term has not yet been completely conceptualized in the international relations discipline, Balçı and Yeşiltaş (2011, p. 16) describe it as a strategy which projects the necessity that all tracks of the diplomacy to be carried out in conformity with each other. Davutoğlu further elaborated this principle and emphasized that a successful foreign policy requires avoiding chaos arose by lack of harmony, yet it is not acceptable to be inactive for the sake of harmony (Davutoğlu'nun ritmik diplomasisi, 2009).

When the U.S. failed to hold sway over the region after the invasion of Iraq in 2003, Turkey realized that avoiding the Middle Eastern affairs would not bring solutions to its problems especially in terms of security and economic interdependence. Thus, Turkey had to drag its interest in the Middle East to compete with regional and global powers to fill the power void. According to Demirtaş (2013, p. 114), there are three major reasons why the Middle East became one of the main focuses of the JDP government: Firstly, to have good relations with neighboring regional countries is important for Turkey's underdeveloped southeastern cities in terms of economy. Therefore, increasing the trade links with neighbors might provide benefits to Turkey. Secondly, to have good diplomatic relations with the neighbors has a potential to contribute to the diminishing of security threats towards Turkey. Lastly, considering the Islamist background of the JDP, Middle Eastern affairs, especially the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, have specific importance in both the party's and various Islamist groups' agenda. This was a major change in the Turkish foreign policy, greatly diverging from the traditional one which was based on the historical distrust to its neighbors, causing Turkey to play defensive roles in the region due to fear of irredentist policies especially practiced by Iran and Syria (Altunışık & Martin, 2011, p. 571). In this regard, it cannot be said that the change was unexpected especially considering Davutoğlu's accusation towards pro-Western foreign policy elites of being unaware of Turkey's potential in using Islamist ideology which might provide Turkey with a leadership role in the Muslim world (Ozkan, 2014, p. 131).

Critics of this doctrine frequently bring forward that the Strategic Depth policy can be regarded as Neo-Ottomanism, which is a political ideology aiming to expand Turkey's sphere of influence in the former territories of the Ottoman Empire. In fact, it was not the first time when Neo-Ottomanism was mentioned in the Turkish foreign policy making. In the beginning of the 1990s, during Turgut Özal's governmental era, Neo-Ottomanism drew much attention with an understanding that puts Turkish ethnic identity forward. With that aspect of this policy, it differs from the JDP's Neo-Ottomanism which does not deal with Turkishness. However,

both interpretation looks at the Ottoman heritage as a source of inspiration to make Turkey more powerful.

Although Neo-Ottomanism is not officially accepted by the JDP as an element of its foreign policy, since it carries a negative and imperialistic connotation (Özcan & Usul, 2010, p. 108), some of the JDP members, and most notably Davutoğlu, frequently praised the Ottoman legacy in their speeches and mentioned linking the previous territories spiritually. To illustrate, in 2013, he answered the critical voices expressing concerns over Neo-Ottomanism with these words (Davutoğlu: Sayabosna'yı Şam'a bağlayacağız, 2013):

“Without waging any wars, pointing anyone as the enemy, disrespecting to any borders, we will once again connect Sarajevo to Damascus, Benghazi to Erzurum and Batumi. This is the source of our power. You might perceive them as separate countries now, however, 110 years ago, Yemen and Skopje were parts of the same country. Or Erzurum and Benghazi.”

Yet, there is no aim to integrate these territories physically, whenever Turkish foreign policy showed tendency to prioritize the Middle East and mentioned the common Ottoman heritage, it disconcerted the Western powers and the governments of the Middle Eastern countries due to the irredentist and imperialistic connotations (Yücel, 2012, p. 115).

Policies of Davutoğlu do not seek to unify former territories of the Ottoman Empire in the Middle East and beyond or to revive an Islamic legal system, although Neo-Ottomanist discourse can be traced in his statements (Taşpınar, 2011, p. 2). Rather, it requires an active implementation of soft power tools, such as pro-active diplomacy, mediator roles, economic and cultural influence. On the issue of cultural ties, Grigoriadis (2010, p. 7) remarks that “religious links with countries of the Balkans, the Middle East, Africa and Asia have been invoked in order to popularize a series of foreign policy initiatives”. For example, Davutoğlu tried to put his arguments into practice over the Jerusalem conflict, by claiming that no conflict regarding Jerusalem could be resolved without consulting the Ottoman archives, and he brought the Ottoman past as a common historical value which put Turkey into a mediator role (Aras, 2009, p. 7).

During the JDP's second term, one of the most debated dimension of the Turkish foreign policy was Turkey's relations with Israel and Iran. Due to the mediator role envisioned by Davutoğlu, Turkey played an active role in resolution of the conflict between Israel and Syria. In 2008, with the Turkish mediation efforts, five meetings were held between Israel and Syria

(Altunışık & Martin, 2011, p. 573). Also, the JDP took on the responsibility to bring Pakistani and Israeli diplomats together in Istanbul in 2005, when they had their first diplomatic contact in the history. However, Turkey's attitude toward Israel changed sharply due to breaking out of the Gaza War in 2009. Ankara responded with sharp criticism and during the World Economic Forum at Davos, the then-Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan stormed off the meeting after offering a vocal critique of the Israeli aggression in Gaza (Öniş, 2011, p. 6). While Turkey's mediating efforts came to an end, the tension got escalated when the Turkish flotilla Mavi Marmara, carrying tons of aids to besieged Gaza, was attacked by Israel after which 9 activists were killed.

The last development marked the end of the Turkey's mediating position, at least between Israel-Syria or Israel-Palestine. Also, it showed the dissidence between Erdoğan and Davutoğlu, when the former declared Israeli policies as *disrespectful to Turkey* and put Turkey's interests and prestige before the mediation process, the latter considered the impartiality of the mediator as an asset (Günay, 2017, p. 204). Despite the failure of the efforts to mediate between Israel and others, Turkey continued to assert itself as a negotiator between Iran and the US. Turkey as a country that had long time avoided to be involved in Iran issue, changed its position from an observer to facilitator and even mediator, especially when the National Security Policy Document, published in 2005, acknowledged Iran's nuclear program as a hot-button one (Ersoy & Gürzel, 2012). This position of Turkey was welcomed by the US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, although convincing Tehran was a bit more challenging (Demirdağ, 2015, p. 283). In 2009, Turkey initiated shuttle diplomacy between the two countries, seeking for a diplomatic solution regarding Iran's nuclear program. As a result of Turkey's efforts to integrate Iran into the international community, a uranium fuel-swap agreement was discussed between the P5+1 countries (the United Nations Security Council permanent members plus Germany) in Vienna in October 2009 (Ersoy & Gürzel, 2012). Although the agreement was approved by Iran in May 2010, the Vienna Group did not move the agreement forward, claiming that Iran was stalling the process.

The rejection of the agreement and the following sanctions enforced by the UN was not warmly met by the Turkish side. The then-Prime Minister Erdoğan spoke up on this issue by asserting that countries opposed to Iran's nuclear program should give up their own nuclear weapons and emphasized that Israel is the only country in the Middle possessing nuclear weapons (Turkey PM, 2009). Moreover, the then-Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmet

Davutoğlu expressed his concern over that the international community's rejection of Iran's right to possess nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Therefore, Turkey's rhetoric and position on that matter gradually diverged from its allies such as the US and the EU (Çaman & Dagci, 2013, pp. 7-8). On the other hand, to ensure the US and other Western allies that Turkey is not experiencing an axis shift, Turkey decided to place a US radar as part of the NATO defense system in Southeast Turkey in September 2011. This decision was marked as the biggest strategic decision between the US and Turkey in the past 15 or 20 years by a White House official (Shanker, 2011). Iran was disturbed by the decision, and Iranian top officials stated that in case of an attack towards Iran, the first targets to shoot would be the defense system installed in Southeast Turkey (Balci, 2017, p. 336). Consequently, the JDP government lost its impartial mediator seat for the second time and the relations with Iran got tense.

The academic debates on the Turkish foreign policy in the Syrian crisis and the Arab Spring have focused on two major dimensions: First, whether Turkey could draw a model for Arab states in establishing democracy, which also put forward further discussions on an axis shift; and second, the criticism of the Turkish foreign policy decisions which were also signaling to its collapse during the Arab Spring.

Davutoğlu perceived the Arab Spring as a long-awaited opportunity for Turkey to lead regime changes in the Middle East. However, this role did not stem from the need for democracy; he thought that leaders should base their legitimacy on Islam (Ozkan, 2014, p. 134). Davutoğlu thought that Western models would not work in the Middle Eastern geography. He stressed that the Arab Spring was inevitable, and Turkey would do anything to support these countries undergoing a transition towards democracy (Arab spring was inevitable, 2011).

Before the Arab Spring spread over a large geography including, Tunisia, Yemen, Jordan, Egypt, Algeria and Syria, Turkey was having its relations on really good terms with the Middle Eastern countries. Ozkan (2014, p. 132) remarks that "Between 2002 and 2011, the year in which the Arab Spring unfolded, the country's annual foreign trade with the Middle East and North Africa increased by nearly 5.4 times, from \$10 billion to \$54 bn". Especially relations with Syria reached a historical peak, as the economic interdependence of both countries increased significantly and the leaders of both countries, Bashar Al-Assad and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, were close friends.

When the mass protests started in Tunisia, Turkish government remained silent in the beginning, whereas it proposed a political solution between the protesters and the governments after the protests began in Bahrain and Libya. Thus, the Turkish government wanted to play a mediator role once more to take advantage of their good relations with Kaddafi administration; however, it did not support opposition or a solution through military intervention (Efegil, 2016, p. 50). The then-Prime Minister Erdoğan clearly expressed that Turkey is strictly against a NATO intervention, and the people of Tunisia and Egypt should determine their own future (Çetin, 2011). However, after a very short notice, Turkish government showed that it is not against NATO-led military intervention strictly anymore. The difference in tone and opinion shows that the JDP's stance towards the Arab Spring has started to change radically.

After the Arab Spring spread to Syria and mass protests began against the Assad government, Davutoğlu went to Damascus in August 2011 to convince the Baathi leader to enforce democratic reforms, thereby Syria could have come through this uprising without being damaged seriously (Balçı, 2017, p. 338). The then-Prime Minister Erdoğan believed that his personal closeness with the Assad family would have helped to convince him; however, Davutoğlu came away from this meeting empty-handed. The historic moment was this meeting, and after that Turkey's Syria policy changed sharply. Then, the Turkish government started to employ normative and institutional foreign policy instruments towards the Syrian government, as the critical voices of Turkey's allies increased, blaming Turkey's soft attitude towards Bashar Al-Assad, and accusing Turkey of being sided with the Baathi regime (Dal, 2013, pp. 722-723). Furthermore, Davutoğlu declared on May 24, 2013 that Ankara would take synchronized steps with Washington regarding the Syrian policy and he made an inaccurate prediction that the end of Syria game will result with the defeat of Al-Assad (Yetkin, 2013).

The JDP's determined support to moderate Islamist currents in this geography is accurately associated with the party's political identity, which is described by its founders as conservative democrat. Also, the JDP believed that the aspiration of a leadership role in the region to lead the transition under the JDP supervision would success, since the time it sided with Sunni Muslim Brotherhood movement against the regimes. Especially after the Muslim Brotherhood's candidate Mohamed Morsi won the Egyptian elections in 2012, Erdoğan had pride in himself in achieving the victory, owing it to their common Islamist background. This development cherished the hopes to achieve the same in Syria. By doing so, the JDP hoped to strengthen its popularity in the countries experiencing the Arab Spring. Morsi government

proved to be incapable of establishing an inclusive democracy, thus was toppled by a military coup led by General Sisi (Oğuzlu, 2016, p. 60). The JDP elites harshly criticized the coup and also felt disappointed, since the Turkish government's kingmaker image was damaged.

The Turkish government called for a regime change in Syria and blamed the Syrian government of murders of protesters several times. It was followed by Turkey's participation to the NATO-imposed arms embargo to Syria and then Turkey imposed economic sanctions on 1 December 2011 (Balci, 2017, p. 338). The JDP government, which always promoted diplomatic means and solutions in case of a conflict, changed its rhetoric after the Arab Spring spread to Syria, and called on militarization of the region (Demirağ & Özpek, 2014, p. 329). Moreover, the Turkish government let the armed opposition groups to organize within Turkey's borders.

Turkey's policy favoring and publicly supporting Syrian opposition seeking for regime change caused a common anxiety over the issue of territorial integrity of Syria and Iraq. Relatedly, People's Protection Units (YPG) which was following an agenda in parallel to PKK, expanded its autonomous territory taking advantage of the turmoil in the Northern Syria to seek ways to proclaim an independent Kurdish state. Therefore, the change in the Syrian policy meant that abandoning the Turkish state's traditional stance rejecting a Kurdish administration in the region. For this reason, the JDP's foreign policy was criticized by the opposition parties, which were vocal in their warnings saying that Davutoğlu's policies were divisive and sectarianist, thus doomed to fail.

Davutoğlu's general approach towards the Arab Spring was optimistic, as he perceived it as an opportunity that would lead Turkey's transformation into a global player by establishing a Turkey-friendly atmosphere in the Middle East (Oğuzlu, 2016, p. 60). However, Turkish government's calling Assad government in Syria as *nusayri*, which is a discriminatory term towards Alawis, and allowing Sunni Islamist groups to organize in the Turkish camps and taking sides in conflicts without a hesitation has not brought positive outcomes for Turkey. Also, Davutoğlu's misreading the dynamics especially in Syria caused Turkey to be isolated in the region. As a result of Turkey's deteriorated relations with its neighbors, Turkey became an unwanted party in the region. In the mainstream global media, it was asserted that Turkey was allegedly acting in line with Saudi Arabia, supporting a hardline Islamist coalition which includes Al Qaeda affiliate groups against Bashar Al-Assad (Sengupta, 2015). These

developments alarmed the US and the EU countries, who prioritized fight against the Islamic State, rather than toppling Assad government.

There are several reasons explaining the souring of Turkey-US relations: Firstly, the Turkish government was confident that the US would play a more active role in Syria, especially after an alleged chemical attack happened in Ghouta in 2013. However, Barack Obama administration backed down from this option. Secondly, in 2014, the Islamic State attacked Kobane which was under control of the People's Protection Units (YPG), then enormous pressure was put on the JDP to help out the YPG which Turkey perceives as a terrorist organization (Balçı, 2017, p. 355). Although Turkey did not help to the YPG, it opened the borders to enable civilian transfer from risk zones to Turkey. Beginning from this specific incident, Washington decided to cooperate with the YPG in their fight against the Islamic State, and then armed and trained YPG militia in Northern Syria, which was criticized harshly by Turkey, as the YPG and the PKK are permeable for each other, and the PKK had long been a serious threat for Turkish security. Lastly, Turkey's reaction towards the junta government in Egypt, was not complemented by Turkey's Western allies. As a result of all these developments, a new term in the Turkish foreign policy emerged, which is *precious loneliness*, indicating that Ahmet Davutoğlu's policy of zero problems with neighbors collapsed.

It was a hot debate whether or not the policy of zero problems with the neighbors was practicable or not. It was not rational to expect this policy to function properly, considering many actors that Turkey has been in relations with and their contradicting interests. To illustrate, Davutoğlu sought to solve gangrenous conflicts that the Turkish political elite could not propose a solution for long time, such as the Turkish-Armenian relations. During this era, the JDP government put considerable efforts to normalize relations with Armenia; however, it has faced with the critical response of Azerbaijan, a country which has a lot of political and economic pressure on Turkey. Also, Turkey's mediating efforts between Iran and P5 + 1 countries caused Turkey to find it difficult to remain impartial. Therefore, from time to time, Turkey sided with Iran to defend Iran's right to obtain nuclear power for peaceful purposes. This position required Turkey to act on the contrarily to its allies. Nevertheless, these efforts to integrate Iran with the international community was not perceived by Iran very positively, in fact, Iran mannerly rejected Turkey's role as a mediator afterwards.

After attempting to consolidate its role as the order-establishing for years, Turkey found itself in an isolated position and following divergent policies not only with its neighbors but

also with its Western allies from time to time. Tarık Oğuzlu (2016, p. 60) remarked that “Turkish rulers have long failed to see why the virtuous “zero problems with neighbors” policy has fast given way to a notorious “zero neighbors without problems” nightmare”. Turkish foreign policy makers mistakenly assumed that Bashar Al-Assad would soon to be toppled from the power, yet they did not realize that Syrian conflict emerged from an internal conflict to a global conflict on Syrian territory where world powers had antagonistic interests. Especially after Russia took part in the conflict by supporting the legitimate government of Syria in response to Bashar Al-Assad’s call for help, Turkey fell into disrepute by continuing to aid and train the so-called *moderate rebels*.

In his elucidative article, Öniş (2011, p. 8) highlighted some elements of continuity and rupture observed in Davutoğlu era which I determine as the period between 2007 and 2016. Based on this work, he incisively pointed out that Turkey’s enthusiasm for the EU membership and its commitment to Western orientation continued in rhetoric; however, beginning from 2007, the Turkish foreign policy makers adopted a more confident and independent style, promoting norms and values which are shared by the Arab Middle East due to common Ottoman history, yet these values were far from being Western. Also, it was mentioned that in Davutoğlu era of the Turkish foreign policy, the attempt to play a more active role in regional and global politics through effective diplomacy and cross-cultural dialogue continued; on the other hand, Turkey’s activism in the Middle East increased; and Turkey became less active in the Balkans and the Central Asia.

After the JDP’s second electoral victory in 2007, the JDP consolidated its power by receiving almost 47 % of the popular votes. Ahmet Davutoğlu’s increased influence in the foreign policy making gave him the opportunity to activate his Strategic Depth policy which outlined an assertive and proactive foreign policy. Based on this vision which can be interpreted as Neo-Ottomanism, Turkey played a more active role in the Middle Eastern affairs, pursuing to use Turkey’s historical and geographical depth to propel it to become a central country, exercising its soft power and shared Islamic values. Since the JDP followed inconstant policies in the Middle East, even self-contradictory moves such as opposing military intervention in Libya, whilst calling on the international community to intervene in Syria, it is difficult to assess this period as a whole and to classify the level of foreign policy change according to Charles Hermann’s typology. Therefore, I will evaluate this period through commenting on each level of foreign policy change and corresponding foreign policy decisions.

According to Charles Hermann (1990, p. 5), international orientation change is the most extreme form of foreign policy change which requires the entire redirection of an actor's international role and the orientation toward world affairs. Davutoğlu era did not present any indicators of an international orientation change since Turkey's Middle Eastern policies were more or less in the same line as the US and the EU. Although Turkey has been a subject of criticism by the West due to its certain decisions, Turkey and its Western allies complemented each other's policies in terms of overall vision and some specific policies. Although Altunışık and Martin (2011, p. 572) proposed that Turkey's souring relations with Israel and initiatives to strengthen relations with Iran over the nuclear issue was abandoning the traditional Western orientation. However, Iran and Israel are two specific cases which did not reflect in overall position of Turkey which can be regarded as an orientation change.

Since 2011 elections, when the JDP won a landslide victory that propelled it to its third governmental period, Turkey's attitude towards Egypt and Syria changed radically. Turkish foreign policy makers showed tendency to side with the parties in the regional conflicts and rather than promoting diplomatic means and solutions, they publicly called for international intervention. Moreover, Turkey cooperated closely with Saudi Arabia and Qatar in its policy aiming to change the power balance and existing order. Therefore, it can be said that Turkey adopted a more explicit style of Neo-Ottomanism in its attempts to reconstruct a new Middle East during the third governmental period, unlike the second period when Davutoğlu emphasized instrumentalization of soft power and flexible diplomacy. To conclude, I address that the Turkish foreign policy during the JDP's second term was subject to a program change since Davutoğlu came up with new terms such as wise country, rhythmic diplomacy and soft power. The JDP proposed new means and ways to achieve its regional goals, which remained more or less the same since the 1990s, yet the previous governments were not able put those regional goals into progress due to domestic problems.

When the third governmental period of the JDP began, a more ambitious foreign policy style can be observed. After the Arab Spring took over a large geography, Turkey became one of the most vocal countries advocating to topple dictators through NATO-led intervention. With the emergence of this atmosphere, Turkey saw an opportunity to influence the change and adjusted its priorities and goals in the Middle East. Consequently, the third period of the JDP has more characteristics of problem/goal change based on Hermann's typology.

Also, the rhetoric praising the Ottoman heritage and Sultan Abdülhamid II became more frequent and visible in this period. Abdülhamid II is a sultan demonstrated by Kemalist tradition as a malignant figure who blocked ways for liberalization and suppressed opposition and media criticizing him. Furthermore, during his reign, the Ottoman Empire lost vast territories including the Balkans, Tunisia, Crete, Egypt and Sudan. Although he was not a successful leader of the downfall period of the Empire, he used Pan-Islamism as an instrument to strengthen his rule and to gain support of the Muslim population. Similarly, Ahmet Davutoğlu's policies were distinguished by the Islamists, as this period was perceived as the continuation of the Ottoman Empire, to remind the Turks that they had ruled their multi-national empire on vast territories spreading to three continents. Not only this, but also this period marked a historical case, as for the first time since the proclamation of the Republic of Turkey, Turkish national identity, which was based on Kemalist principles with a focus on Western values for decades, came off the stage due to rise of Neo-Ottomanism.

Redefining the Turkish identity through the Ottoman legacy in this period signaled not only the foreign policy change but also the dispute between status-quoist foreign policy tradition and the emerging one. Especially when the Erdoğan government first decided to be involved in the Lebanon crisis by sending 1000 Turkish troops to the UN peacekeeping force, President Ahmet Necdet Sezer opposed the decision by asserting that Turkey's responsibility is not to defend other's national interests (Rabasa & Larrabee, 2008, P. 86). This dispute marked the confrontation of traditional Turkish national identity which was based on founding principles of the Republic and the Neo-Ottomanist identity which outlines the necessity of deep involvement in the Middle East through pro-activism.

5. The Turkish Foreign Policy on a Eurasianist Path

After the Arab uprisings expanded on a large geography, Russian Federation viewed the insurgencies and the NATO-led military intervention in Libya as a global conflict of hegemony with the US. In September 2015, Russian Parliament enacted a decree, approving Russia to launch airstrikes targeting all terrorist groups in Syria, including the Islamic State and the jihadist groups revolted against Bashar Al-Assad (Russia joins war in Syria, 2015). As the Russian military presence got more intense in Syria, the chances that Russia and Turkey encounter with each other on the field increased, causing disturbance of both sides. Especially, Russia's commitment to fight with all groups threatening the legitimate government of Syria, exacerbated Turkish leader Erdoğan's tone in criticizing Russia, since opposition militias were supported publicly by the Turkish government.

The tension transformed into hostility between Turkey and Russia, after the Turkish Armed Forces shot down a Russian SU-24 fighter jet allegedly violating Turkish airspace near Syrian border on 24 November 2015 (Rus uçağını kim düşürdü?, 2015). According to the statement published by the Turkish Armed Forces the jet was shot according to the rules of engagement after a series of violation of the Turkish airspace and after being warned multiple times. The Russian pilot Oleg Peshkov was shot dead by the militants on the ground, which caused the escalation of tension even more. After the upsetting incident, Vladimir Putin disclaimed the statement of the Turkish side regarding the airspace violation and asserted that there will be serious consequences in Turkish-Russian relations. Particularly, the phrase "we are stabbed in our back" was the sign of the upcoming difficultness of bilateral relations (Putin: Sırtımızdan bıçaklandık, 2015). Turkey brought it right away on the agenda of the NATO, even before setting up a mutual consultation mechanism with Russia. Furthermore, the then-Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu stated that he gave the order to shoot the jet (Uçak krizinde yıldönümü, 2016). These two developments led the Russian side to think the jet was shot down on purpose by taking into account the nationality of the jet. Also, in the history of the NATO, it was the first time a Russian jet was shot by a NATO member.

Although it is practically almost impossible that a Prime Minister to be alerted of a situation of an insignificant airspace violation and he/she gives the order to shoot in such a short notice, Ahmet Davutoğlu wanted to take on the responsibility by putting forth a strong posture in the heat of moment. In the following months, Russia enforced a series of embargos to Turkey. To give a few examples, as Turkey's image was highly damaged in the eyes of Russian people

and media, the number of Russian tourists coming to Turkey decreased by 77.3 % (Rus turist sayısı, 2016), and Russian authorities proposed that visa regulation for Turkish citizens visiting Russia is back (Rusya'dan Türkiye'ye, 2015). Also, Turkey's exports of 21 agriculture products were restricted by the Russian authorities.

On the other hand, in the domestic politics of Turkey, the then-Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu and the President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan had several disagreements over the JDP's Central Executive Board's decision to decrease Davutoğlu's authority. Moreover, Davutoğlu publicly criticized the decision of pre-trial detention for the academicians who signed the petition to end the curfew in the South-Eastern cities (Erdoğan, Davutoğlu'nu bugün de, 2016). Erdoğan contradicted Davutoğlu's words rigorously later in one his speeches. As a result of few more discrepancies, Davutoğlu decided to hold an Extraordinary Congress of the JDP in which he did not stand as a candidate of the party leadership. This was later named as the May 4 Palace coup, as he decided to leave the duty after a meeting with Erdoğan at his presidential palace. Consequently, the Davutoğlu Era came to an end as the result of the President Erdoğan's request.

It would be very accurate to interpret Turkey's foreign policy decisions, continuity and change by taking into account Turkey's domestic politics at some point, since Turkey had a very busy agenda since 2015. Davutoğlu's indirect resignation from the duty after receiving 49.5 % of the popular votes in November 2015 elections was an unexpected decision. Also, Turkey's deep involvement in the Syrian conflict was heavily criticized by the opposition parties and groups, since the secular state was supporting Islamist groups some of which were affiliates of Al-Nusra terrorist organization. Deteriorated relations with Russia was another pressure on the President Erdoğan, therefore he wrote an apology letter to Vladimir Putin on 27 June 2016, which was warmly met by Russia.

On 15 July 2016, a violent military coup d'état, targeting to topple the President Erdoğan and takeover the state apparatus, causing the death of over 200 people, was prevented by the security forces. Aftermath of the incident, it was revealed by the Turkish government that the attempted coup was orchestrated by Fethullah Gülen, who is residing in a mansion in Pennsylvania, the US, and also a clerical leader of the Gülenist community which has hundreds of schools in Turkey and all around the world, aiming to provide religious education to school children, by doing so to increase their scope of network (Fetö'nün tarihçesi, 2017). Later than that, it was revealed and admitted by Graham Fuller, ex-Chief of CIA in Kabul, he wrote a

recommendation letter for Fethullah Gülen's green card application in the US (Fuller, 2017). Therefore, connecting the dots, Turkish authorities found this relation quite suspicious.

Tehran and Moscow expressed strong support for the Turkish government's struggle, which gave a new meaning to the normalization process of Turkey and Russia (Erşen, 2017b, p. 95). On the other hand, Turkey's NATO allies gave mixed signals in the aftermath of the failed coup, yet all criticized the attempt. However, the President Erdoğan was disappointed by their reluctant support. Moreover, Stratfor, a geopolitical intelligence platform in the US, which usually do not share more than a few tweets daily on Twitter social media platform, became very active on the night of 15 July, and shared three tweets consecutively regarding the President Erdoğan's plane's location (Stratfor, 2016). Also, the same account of Stratfor claimed that the President Erdoğan went to Germany, seeking asylum. These developments were complemented by the US' rejection of the extradition of Fethullah Gülen.

Alexander Dugin (2017, p. 176), the founder of Russian Neo-Eurasianism, claimed in his book that he visited high-level Turkish officials before the attempted coup to warn them that there was restlessness among Turkish military forces, which might lead to a coup d'état. Based on his views, the attempted coup was not a domestic issue of Turkish politics but a geopolitical one. Also, his contact with the Turkish Patriotic Party (PP) which pursues an anti-globalist, nationalist and Kemalist agenda, aiming the reconciliation of the Turkish-Russian relations is said to have a very important influence to open proper communication channels for Erdoğan and Putin. The Turkish Minister of Foreign Relations Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu thanked Russia with these words: "We thank the Russian authorities, particularly President Putin. We have received unconditional support from Russia, unlike other countries" (Turkey thanks Putin, 2016).

After Russian-Turkish normalization period began, there had been several developments on extending the bilateral relations in terms of visa, trade, energy, and cooperation. Also, President Erdoğan has called his Russian counterpart "my dear friend" several times (Weise & Oliphant, 2016). The two leaders came together for several occasions, and even until their meeting on 3 April 2018, they met face to face eleven times in total since November 2015 crisis (Putin ile 12.kez başbaşa, 2018). In October 2016, the natural gas pipeline project, Turkish Stream, which was temporarily halted after Turkey's shooting down the jet, came onto the table again. The intergovernmental agreement was signed and the construction began in May 2017 (How Gazprom's statement, 2017). Consequently,

rapprochement with Russia in all areas had some repercussions in the Turkish foreign policy which resulted Turkey to rotate its rhetoric almost 180 degrees.

On 19 December 2016, the Russian ambassador to Turkey, Andrei Karlov was assassinated by an off-duty policeman during an artwork exhibition in Ankara. The tragic incident was due to conflicting presence of Turkey and Russia in Syria, especially in a time when the civilians were being evacuated from Aleppo. However, both sides took careful steps not to ruin the normalization period, and the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergei Lavrov declared that it was an attempt to turn Russia and Turkey against each other (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, 2016). One day after of this tragic happening, Turkey and Russia agreed on a ceasefire plan to lead the peaceful transition in Syria. This was to prepare the base for the upcoming Astana Talks, of which Russia, Turkey and Iran are the guarantor countries to carry out Syria peace talks. In the meeting of 20 December 2016, Lavrov emphasized that Russia, Iran and Turkey agreed on that their priority is to fight against terrorism, not regime change (Russia, Iran and Turkey agree that, 2016). This meant that the Turkish foreign policy was making a u turn, abandoning its past rhetoric that stressed to oust Al-Assad from power. Complete opposite of Davutoğlu's policy and rhetoric, Turkish foreign policy makers accepted that Russia is an important regional partner, even the most influential in solving the Syrian turmoil.

As the Islamic State expanded their scope of control in the Northern Syria, Turkish Armed Forces launched the Euphrates Shield Operation on 24 August 2016 to secure Syrian-Turkish border and to clear the civilian routes from terrorists. During the military operation that lasted 216 days, not only Islamic State was targeted. The YPG controlled territories were also taken over the Turkish soldiers, which caused uneasiness with the Turkey-US relations. Also, one of the high-level US general stated that the YPG is the US boots on the ground, caused a moral outrage in Turkey (Köse, 2018). Despite the US warnings that the Euphrates Shield Operation should target Islamic State groups primarily, Turkish Armed Forces continued its operation with consent of Russia.

In a joint press conference in Sochi on 3 May 2017, President Putin stated that bilateral cooperation to fight against terrorism has intensified and now they have been returning to normal partnership with Turkey (Putin and Erdoğan hail, 2017). Along with the gradual elimination of trade barriers, the areas of cooperation included security, as Russia and Turkey signed an accord in December 2017, which brought forward Russia to sell \$2.5 billion worth

S-400 missile air defense system to Turkey (Turkey says Russian S-400, 2018). Thus, as the second largest military force of the NATO, Turkey became the first country to have Russian made S-400 missile system.

Turkey's vague relations with Iran have become clearer as well in this period. Both countries' role in the Astana Talks to bring Syria destabilization and frequent meetings of two Presidents have deepened the bilateral cooperation. With a trade deal signed on October 2017, both country agreed to use their national currencies – Turkish lira and Iranian rial, in commercial exchanges instead of the US dollar (Turkey, Iran to use national currencies, 2017). Turkey has sought for currency agreement with countries which Turkey has high trade volume with such as Russia, Iran and China, only with Iran it has been achieved so far.

On the other hand, Turkey's tense relations with the EU and the US got more visible, as the US support to the Kurdish militia which was perceived as a threat by Turkey continued. Moreover, during the post-coup period in Turkey, the Western based media outlets and think tanks produced contents which were suspicious of that who was behind the failed coup of 15 July 2016. Even, in an article published by The Times (Waterfield, 2017) it was claimed that the EU intelligence service, Intcen, leaked a report on that Erdoğan planned the purge which followed the coup, before 15 July, yet this document is confidential and cannot be reached on the internet. The critical voices in Europe intensified their concerns over human rights violations during the investigation and trial phase of the people who are linked to Gülenist movement. Also, Erdoğan and the JDP were condemned several times due to the rise of authoritarianism, especially after the April 2017 referendum on transforming the parliamentary system to the presidential system.

The public opinion's suspicion towards Turkey's NATO integration increased during this period, especially after a scandal broke out during a joint NATO warfare exercise in Norway, when Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Mustafa Kemal Atatürk were depicted on the slides as the enemy (Nato apologises to Turkey, 2017). The secretary general of NATO Jens Stoltenberg apologized for the offence caused and blamed individuals for this action. As a result, Turkey withdrew 40 of its soldiers from the joint drill.

All of the abovementioned developments can be interpreted through Turkey's changing foreign policy rhetoric and the lessons learned from Davutoğlu period, when zero-problems with the neighbors policy evolved into precious loneliness. It is understandable that Turkish

foreign policy makers tried to create alternative partnerships and policies to not to be isolated from regional and global affairs, especially the Syrian conflict where Turkey has a lot of interests in terms of security, energy and trade. However, still the EU is the most important trade partner of Turkey and Turkey is participating in the European Union Customs Union. Moreover, Turkey has the second largest military among the NATO body, of which its all defense system is integrated with the NATO.

Although there is ongoing debate whether to leave NATO and join the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, it is unlikely to expect that Turkey would step into action to leave the NATO at least in close future. In terms of Turkey's attitude towards the US and Israel, it should be taken into account that the rhetoric adopted by Erdoğan and foreign policy makers does not reflect the actions of foreign policy. To illustrate, Israel has been condemned by the JDP government several times since 2009 over its human right violations. Recently on 14 May 2018, the President Erdoğan stated in a press conference in London that "Israel is a terrorist state" (Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan: İsrail bir terör devletidir, 2018). However, on 15 May 2018, a resolution proposed by the main opposition party, the Republican People's Party, with regards to the cancellation of all agreements with the Israeli state was rejected with the votes of the JDP deputies (AKP İsrail'e karşı, 2018). This decision was highly criticized by the opposition, since the rhetoric of the JDP and Erdoğan towards Israel is harsh; yet, their actions show the opposite. Also, regarding the Mavi Marmara incident that happened in 2010, both states reached an agreement in 2016 that Israel to pay \$20 million as compensation to Turkey. Aftermath, the President Erdoğan criticized the crew of the aid flotilla with these words: "Did you ask the then-Prime Minister before sending the humanitarian aid? We are already helping Gaza" (Erdoğan'dan Mavi Marmara fırçası, 2016).

To conclude, the JDP's foreign policy in the recent years and the reconciliation with Russia can be interpreted as the rise of Eurasianist ideology, as the Eurasianist Patriotic Party was very active in the beginning of rapprochement. The Turkish Eurasianism is considered as the fourth geopolitical identity by some scholars, along with the traditional ones such as Westernism, Pan-Turkism and Pan-Islamism (Aktürk, 2015, p. 54). Its anti-US and Eurosceptic nature defending national interests through a strong nation-state and national economy has found itself a widespread support among military, academic and intellectual circles. Therefore, the recent foreign policy changes favoring deepened relations with Russia, Iran, Central Asian countries and China is well in line with the Eurasianist geopolitical thought for pragmatic

reasons. According to Hermann's typology of foreign policy change, the Turkish foreign policy after 2016 corresponds to the problem/goal change and goes beyond its scope, when we compare the third and fourth governmental period of the JDP. Although it is a hot debate issue whether Turkey is experiencing an international orientation change, all of the abovementioned inconsistencies that the Turkish foreign policy makers adopted in their decisions for the sake of multi-dimensional foreign policy demonstrate that Turkey cannot turn its back to its Western allies. Turkey's historical role as the ally of the US is still visible, though weakened and damaged seriously. Therefore, I regard Turkey's recent foreign policy change as an experimental practice to introduce a brand-new identity for the future, which is Eurasianism. In order to demonstrate a clearer assessment, the overview of the JDP's foreign policy roles, practices, changes and its relation with the Turkish national identities with regard to different governmental terms were presented in the Table 1.

Table 1. A summary of the JDP's foreign policy in each governmental term

	1st period (2002-2007)	2nd period (2007-2011)	3rd period (2011-2015)	4th period (2015-2017)
FP* style/role and tools	Pro-active, eager and reformist	Soft power, flexible diplomacy	Assertive, interventionist, king-maker	Reconciliatory, pragmatic
FP practice	Harmonization package offered by the EU, start of the accession talks	Strategic depth, zero problems with neighbors	Active in peace-keeping roles, precious loneliness, deep involvement in the Middle East	Sharp criticism towards the West, rapprochement with Eurasia, active participation in Syrian peace process
Change	Adjustment change: the level of determination and efforts were increased	Program change: new foreign policy means	Problem/goal change: adjusted priorities	Problem/goal change, plus few aspects of international orientation change limited with pragmatic foreign policy behavior
Reflection of identity in the FP	Western-oriented, commitment to the EU membership	Emphasis on shared values with the Middle Eastern countries, Islam as a connecting factor	Rise of Neo-Ottomanism, confrontation of traditional Turkish FP (status-quoist)	Permeability of Neo-Ottomanism and Eurasianism

* Foreign Policy

Source: Author's contribution

Conclusion

In this thesis, the main objective was to answer the question that how did the Turkish foreign policy change during the JDP era between 2002 and 2017 in the context of Turkish national identity. Based on the foreign policy change framework of Charles Herman, each governmental term of the JDP was analyzed in terms of foreign policy decisions and the changing rhetoric, which occasionally showed indications of clash of alternative national identities.

In the introduction part of the thesis, the circumstances determining the Turkish politics before the JDP was propelled to the power was presented. Until the 2000s, it was expected that Turkey to play an active role in the Balkans, Caucasias and the Central Asia especially after the Soviet Union's influence came to an end in these regions. It was urgent to answer this issue regarding whether Turkey could propose a new foreign policy vision compatible with the new world order or not. Domestic issues such as economic crisis and security problems paved the way for the JDP to become successful in the 2002 general elections. The JDP, a conservative democrat and Islamist party, introduced a pro-active foreign policy by taking advantage of new foreign policy means and instruments since 2002. These new means and methods were analyzed through qualitative content analysis to expand the scope of the analysis by looking at the rhetoric and the foreign policy practices together to reveal the level of the change. Also, in terms of identity, the relation between states' interest, relatedly the foreign policy, and identity was scrutinized from a constructivist point of view.

In the first chapter of the thesis, traditional Turkish national identities, which is interchangeable with foreign policy identity in this work, were analyzed. Based on my approach, there are three prevailing identities, which are Westernism, Islamism/Neo-Ottomanism and Turkism. In order to comprehend how the JDP instrumentalized national identities in its rhetoric, it is important to look through the emergence and development of these three identities. For why, predicating Turkey's transformation to 10-15 years would lead me to inaccuracy, especially considering the sensitivity regarding Turkey's founding principles both in its domestic and international affairs.

In the second chapter, the methodology and the theoretical framework of Charles Hermann on the foreign policy change behavior was explained. The fourfold categorization of the foreign policy change proposed by Hermann were adjustment changes, program changes,

problem/goal changes, and international orientation changes. According to this framework, the foreign policy changes in the JDP's each governmental term were categorized. Based on my findings in, the JDP contributed to the expansion of the Turkish economy, in parallel with this, sought to cast an active and central role for Turkey both in regional and international politics; however, Turkey's efforts to steer the Middle Eastern affairs independently did not succeed as it was hoped in the beginning. Therefore, it is difficult to observe a radical change in the Turkish foreign policy.

In terms of Hermann's typology, the first governmental term of the JDP showed indications of an adjustment change in the foreign policy, as the JDP put a greater effort than its predecessors on the issue of Turkey's EU membership, and the main target did not change. During the second governmental term, Ahmet Davutoğlu redirected Turkish foreign policy into the Middle East, aiming to become a central power utilizing the common Ottoman history with the region, as the EU process slowed down seriously. Thus, I categorize this change as a program change since the foreign policy priorities shifted. After 2011, the Turkish foreign policy purposes were replaced and can be categorized as problem/goal change. As can be seen in the analysis, in each governmental term, the scope of the change was taken a step further which led to the debates on whether Turkey was experiencing an axis shift.

In my opinion, radical changes in the rhetoric of foreign policy makers which result in bilateral tension are highly influenced by their goal to gain public support fueled by Islamic or nationalistic sentiments. To illustrate, Erdoğan's reaction at the Davos Summit can be viewed as a Muslim country's reaction to protect Palestinian rights. However, the reality shows that, there is no rupture with Israel and the JDP did not impose sanctions towards Saudi Arabia on the issue of its bombardment of Yemeni civilians. This is because the Israeli-Palestinian issue is much more politicized and it is easier to stimulate Turkish people's reaction towards Israel.

The most debated era of the JDP is its fourth governmental term which started in 2015. In the fifth chapter of the thesis, I ascertained that the changes occurred in the Turkish foreign policy which were thought to be compatible with the axis shift term cannot be categorized as the international orientation change, since Turkey is still an important ally of the US and a member of the NATO, and as a candidate country of the EU, it still seeks to become a reputable member of the community of the Western world. Although Turkey created alternative partnerships with Russia and Iran in terms of the Middle Eastern affairs and economic interdependency, it did not achieve to become a global power in accordance with its position in

the international system. Therefore, I assume that Turkey could only complete the most extreme type of the foreign policy change, which is the international orientation change, by changing its position and increase its gravity in international alliances. Thus, until now, there are no symptoms indicating a complete orientation change or an axis shift.

In terms of national identity and its impact on the foreign policy making, the JDP achieved to form a new vision by utilizing its historical and cultural ties with the Middle Eastern countries, yet it was not successfully reflected into foreign policy practices. According to the constructivist point of view, as was mentioned in the first chapter, there is an organic link between foreign policy behaviors and national identities of states. Therefore, the JDP constructed a brand-new identity, which was already put forth in the 1990s but diminished quickly. The JDP era can be interpreted as the first time when Turkey's position as a Western ally was challenged with a harsh criticism.

In the beginning of the 1990s, agenda of the Turkish politics was encircled by three identities, which are Islamism, Turkism and Westernism. The JDP era paved the way for the Neo-Ottomanism to become an issue of debate both in public opinion and academia. Since the 2016 failed coup d'état, the Turkish public opinion favoring West as Turkey's prioritized ally was largely diminished. Therefore, unlike the conditions during the Cold War era which compelled states to make sharp decision between the West and the East, the changing world order, the economic development of China, and increased political competency of Russia and Iran enabled countries which are straddling, to diversify their foreign policy decisions. Consequently, in the Turkish politics nowadays, by means of composition of its different historical identities, it is more likely that Turkey to play a pro-active role especially on the regional matters. However, rather than an ideological shift in the foreign policy, these changes are expected to serve as pragmatic tools, which seek to balance power politics in the critical regions. According to the current conjuncture, it is likely that we observe inconsistencies of the Turkish foreign policy in the future, since the recent changes are not substantial, but utilitarian.

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